

**EQUIPPING HAITIAN CHURCH LEADERS
FOR WORKPLACE MINISTRY AND DISCIPLESHIP**

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**BY
FRANTZY DELPHONSE**

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To my family and Haiti.

CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	viii
ABSTRACT.....	ix
CHAPTER ONE: Workplace Ministry and Discipleship: The Haitian Challenge	1
Purpose & Goals	2
Methodology	3
Haitian Poverty & Corruption, Material & Spiritual	4
What Can and Should Christians Do?.....	7
Strategies for Haitian-American Church Leaders to Address Socioeconomic Needs	8
Addressing Haitian Poverty & Corruption with Biblical Values.....	13
Corruption in the Haitian Political and Legal System	14
From Material to Spiritual: The Impact of Voodoo	16
Corruption in the Haitian Workplace	19
Biblical Values to Benefit the Haitian Economy and Workplace.....	21
Biblical Teachings as a Foundation for Workplace Integrity	23
Teaching Biblical Values to Voodooists	25
Hope through Workplace Ministry	27
A Model for Workplace Ministry	28
Four Kinds of “Workplace Salt”	29
Bridging the Faith-Work Gap	30
Haitian Churches and Haitian-American Churches	33

CHAPTER TWO: Resources for a New Haitian Workplace Ministry Initiative.....	35
Literature Review	36
Summary	52
CHAPTER THREE: A Biblical Theology of Work for the Haitian Saints.....	55
Good Work and Labor: God’s Divine Task to the Haitian Worker.....	59
Workplace Evil and Corruption.....	61
Redeeming the Workplace	64
CHAPTER FOUR: A Workplace Discipleship Curriculum for Haitian and Haitian-American Churches.....	69
<u>LESSON 1</u>: Workplace Discipleship Vocabulary.....	70
<u>LESSON 2</u>: Work As God Intended It and As It Is	75
<u>LESSON 3</u>: Overcoming Workplace Challenges in Egypt: The Lessons of Joseph.....	79
<u>LESSON 4</u>: Doing God’s Work in Babylon: Learning from Daniel	83
<u>LESSON 5</u>: Doing the Right Thing in the Workplace: Ten Commandments	87
CHAPTER FIVE: Taking Stock and Moving Forward.....	93
Conclusion	98
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	99
VITA.....	102

PREFACE

From the sacred chamber of my heart through the epicenter of my soul and with all the strength of my being comes out a cry, ‘*homo natus est, dua res, et intellegendum et agendum esse*,’ translated as ‘man is born for two things, to think and to act.’ Meanwhile, Descartes whistles in the background “*cogito ergo sum*,” translated as “I think, therefore I am.”¹

Indeed, the neglect of Workplace Ministry and Discipleship in our churches has motivated me not only to think, but also to act by writing these helpful pages under my thesis-project, ‘Equipping Haitian Church Leaders for Workplace Ministry and Discipleship.’ In the Great Commission, Mark 15:16, our Lord Jesus Christ commands Christians to spread the Good News of salvation and make disciples all over the world from Jerusalem to the end of the world. In fact, our Jerusalem today is our workplace, a neglected mission field where most of us spend 8 hours a day, 40 hours a week, 1600 hours a month, and 6,400 hours a year, and more than a third of our lifetime.

Therefore, I am challenging every Haitian Christian worker and leader to think of the following questions: Have we ever used any of our time to impact coworkers for Christ? Have we ever thought of the necessity to connect our faith to our daily task at the workplace? Do we know that our work matters to God? Have we been aware that our work must be a service rendered to God even at the workplace? How do we integrate our faith in our profession at the workplace? Do we know that we are the light and salt of the

¹ René Descartes, *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason, and Seeking the Truth in the Sciences* (1637; Project Gutenberg, 2008), ebook 59, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/59/59-h/59-h.htm#part4> (accessed April 8, 2015).

workplace? Do we know how to become a spiritual influence for our coworkers in the workplace? Do we know how to resist and overcome temptations to do evil in the workplace? Do we know how to overcome barriers to the expression of our faith at the workplace? Have we thought at church how to cope with job-related stress, physical and emotional mistreatment, sexual harassment and abuse, injustice, racism, unfairness, dehumanization, humiliation, exploitation, insecurity, hazardous environment, and threat?

Those are also ethical questions that have to do with the manner we behave and act, the way we conduct our daily business, the fashion we perform our task, the way we relate to and treat other people in the workplace. Do we talk the walk of salvation in the workplace? At the same time, do we walk the talk of salvation in our place of employment?

There is also a challenge before every Christian Haitian church leader to think, pray, and act upon the suffering of the Haitian people in Haiti and in the U.S. How should the Haitian churches help the Haitian people get rid of their eternal poverty that they long endure in Haiti and abroad? What can the Haitian leaders do better to eradicate poverty among the Haitians in Haiti and in the U.S? How can the Haitian churches and Christian organizations better contribute to the socio-economic development of Haiti? What is the responsibility of the Haitian church leaders in all of these? What role can the Christian seminaries and institutions play in this endeavor to equip church leaders and the saints for workplace ministry and discipleship in Haiti and the U.S?

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*

To my beautiful and loving wife and lifelong friend, Edouarde M. Delphonse, who supports me with our three boys, Frantz David, Ed Matthew, and Jeremy Frantzy Delphonse.

*

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*

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*

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*

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ABSTRACT

Haitian American church leaders must equip the saints to share the Gospel in the workplace and to connect their faith to their work to bridge the faith-gap between Sunday and Monday morning. This thesis-project examines how Haitian churches can apply a biblical theology of work to help the Haitian people meet their socio-economic needs, help eradicate Haitian poverty, and equip Christians for workplace ministry and discipleship in Haiti and the United States, and provides a curriculum with five well-structured lessons on workplace ministry and discipleship and suggestions for implementing a workplace ministry program among Haitians in the U.S. and Haiti.

CHAPTER ONE

Workplace Ministry and Discipleship: The Haitian Challenge

Today Western churches seem to show a lack of interest in workplace theology, which largely may contribute to the hostility in the work environment to workplace ministry and discipleship. At the same time, there has been a profound confusion in the way Christians and church leaders conceive work in relation to their Christian faith, and the secular vis-à-vis the sacred; this is particularly true in the Haitian community which has inherited a sober history of work slavery, and socio-economic and political misfortune from the genesis of the nation of Haiti in 1804 until today. In an endeavor to bridge the gap between faith and work, between Sunday and Monday, the following thesis-project will address the challenge of “Equipping Haitian-American church leaders for workplace ministry and discipleship.”

Haitian poverty has long been a dominant preoccupation for the United Nations and many non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which seem unable to win the poverty battle on the ground in Haiti.

Alleviating poverty in Haiti should also be the burden of Christian church leaders in the Haitian Diaspora in the United States as well as of Christian church leaders in Haiti.

Haitian churches everywhere have human and material resources that could be used in a common effort to help create or improve jobs and facilitate economic development in Haiti. Beyond financial support and humanitarian aid, sustained efforts to disseminate Christian values could even more significantly help the Haitian people address corruption, unemployment, and other evils invading their society and workplaces.

As we conducted research for this thesis-project, we found no evidence of programs focusing on workplace ministry and discipleship in Haitian churches, neither in the United States nor Haiti. This is a serious gap that deserves attention.

Purpose & Goals

The goals of this thesis-project are the following: first, to describe Haitian poverty and corruption and propose church-based programs to address socioeconomic challenges in Haiti; second, to define the problems stemming from the lack of workplace ministry and discipleship programs in Haitian churches; third, to propose a way to equip Haitian church leaders to carry out the aforementioned programs. Information, resources, and program ideas are included, which may enable church leaders to build faithful workplace ministry and discipleship in the Haitian-American context, then in Haiti itself.

Four areas of need underscore the urgency of workplace ministry and discipleship programs in Haiti:

First, the dire socioeconomic situation in Haiti demands a response from the church. “If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?” (1 Jn 3:17 NIV).¹ Simple compassion should motivate our response.

Second, a great deal of Haitian poverty is related to and even caused by ongoing corruption and injustice in the Haitian economy. I believe that bringing biblical values to the workplace can help counter corruption and injustice.

¹ All Scripture quotations are from the New International Version, unless otherwise specified.

Third, at the deepest level, people are lost and need to be saved from sin – not just from the penalty of sin, but also from the power of sin in their lives. Christ’s followers are commanded to make Jesus Christ the center of their lives. In Colossians 1:12-13, the Apostle Paul explains, “giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves...” The workplace is important as an evangelistic target.

Fourth, even beyond the potential blessings and impacts on our people, it is a simple and clear imperative of our faith that leaders and congregants connect their faith to their work. Whether we can show immediate results or not, God’s Word requires us to make Jesus Christ Lord of the workplace and marketplace.

I want to explore how Haitian-American church leaders can be helped to develop programs assisting their people to connect biblical faith to the realities and challenges of the workplace, both in the U.S. and in Haiti.

Methodology

As an initial foray into this subject matter, a two-hour workshop session for Haitian-American church leaders was held twice at the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary’s Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME) in Boston on November 22, 2014 and January 17, 2015. A brief report on these two different workshop sessions on “Equipping Haitian-American Church Leaders for Workplace Ministry and Discipleship” is included at the beginning of Chapter Two below. Thus, the research for this thesis-

project included not just reading books and articles, but conversations, informal interviews with church leaders and laity, workshops, Sunday school, and preaching series.

Haitian Poverty & Corruption, Material & Spiritual

In her article, “Haiti: The Bitter Grapes of Corruption,” Nancy Roc believes that the economic turmoil of Haiti began after its independence on January 1, 1804, as the first free black republic in the world. Of course, the legacy of slavery and exploitation before independence was no picnic either, but the point is that from the very outset Haiti has had a troubled and chaotic economy. Two centuries later bitter suffering and endemic poverty continue to plague Haiti despite significant international aid and countless contributions from non-profit organizations, which have provided food and shelter, education, and medical assistance.²

According to Terry F. Buss and Robert Fatton Jr., Haiti has the lowest Gross National Product (GNP), per capita income, and one of the worst human development indices (HDI) in the world, based upon life expectancy, literacy, and life quality of a citizen. Haiti remains the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.³

Robert Maguire, in his article, notes that 78 percent of Haiti’s population earns less than \$2 a day, and 56 percent make less than \$1 a day. According to Maguire, “in rural Haiti, where some 60 percent of its 9.7 million people live, extremes of destitution

² Nancy Roc, “Haiti: The Bitter Grapes of Corruption,” FRIDE, March 23, 2009, 8, http://fride.org/download/COM_Haiti_bitter_grapes_ENG_mar09.pdf (accessed February 4, 2015).

³ Terry F. Buss, *Haiti in the Balance: Why Foreign Aid Has Failed and What We Can Do About It* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), 10, 11, 14; Robert Fatton Jr., *Haiti: Trapped in the Outer Periphery* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2014), 55, 56.

are even greater: 86 percent of the population earns less than \$2 a day and 69 percent less than \$1 a day. By estimation, 300,000 of the 3 million residing in the metropolitan area wake up every day without a penny in their pocket.”⁴

According to the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress, many Haitians are suffering and dying from diseases, and there is a high infant death rate caused by hunger and malnutrition. The lack of proper sanitation and clean drinking water have contributed significantly to the emergence of diseases like cholera, which killed thousands of people in 2010. Haiti has been among the countries with the worst health record, because there is a lack of a sound mechanism in place for sanitation. Eighty percent of Haitian people live in poverty; half of Haitian children suffer from malnutrition, with 5 deaths per 31 baby births. Less than half of the Haitian population has access to clean drinking water, and there are 25 physicians and 11 nurses per 100,000 people.⁵

In January 12, 2010, a massive earthquake killed more than 300,000 people and injured more than 330,000 individuals in Haiti. That earthquake further damaged Haiti’s feeble economy and infrastructure. Such a natural catastrophe left a huge humanitarian crisis with scores of mentally ill and physically injured people, many of whom were left jobless and homeless. Haiti’s economic condition has further deteriorated because between the years of 1980 and 2010 there were 33 major tropical storms that caused

⁴ Robert Maguire, *Haiti after the Donor’s Conference: A Way Forward* Special Report 232. (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2009): 3, http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/haiti_after_donors_conference_0.pdf (accessed February 4, 2015).

⁵ U.S. Library of Congress—Federal Research Division, “Country Profile: Haiti,” May 2006, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Haiti.pdf> (accessed February 4, 2015).

about 12,000 deaths and billions of dollars worth of environmental damages. This relentless string of natural disasters has contributed to poverty, unemployment, corruption, sexual trafficking, prostitution, violence, and socio-political instability in Haiti.⁶

In his book, *The Bottom Billion*, Paul Collier expresses concern for the abject conditions in poor countries, among which Haiti is included. Collier analyzes the global economy, focusing on ‘falling apart and falling behind’ countries—those considered the poorest of the poor. According to Collier, major traps holding down these economies include internal armed conflicts, neighboring wars, epidemic diseases, illiteracy, dysfunctional and mediocre government, a broken system of state management, bribery and financial corruption, unskilled and unsupervised administrators and workers, corrupt leaders and politicians, political unrest, and bad governance.⁷

Collier proposes solutions and alternatives to help countries like Haiti escape from the aforementioned traps. First, Collier recommends that the Group of 8 (G8), a governmental forum of leading advanced economies in the world, open their economic doors and create opportunities for the “Bottom Billion” (the poorest nations) to participate in the global market. Second, he advocates the establishment of new economic policies to regulate the banking system in poor countries. Third, the author encourages the G8 to invest in the construction of adequate infrastructure and technology to stimulate economic development and communication in poor countries.⁸

⁶ Fatton, *Haiti: Trapped*, 173.

⁷ Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done about It* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 3.

About solving the poverty problem in Haiti, Robert Fatton says:

A strategy of development for Haiti should promote an alternative model based on the protection and reinvigoration of domestic production that satisfies basic needs and privileges the development of the rural areas where two-thirds of Haitians live. The fundamental objectives of this agrarian-based strategy should be the promotion of food, self-sufficiency, the curbing of obscene class and regional inequalities, and the development of a sense of national cohesion. Unless priority is given to agriculture and food production, Haiti will remain in crisis, having to beg for assistance from outsiders.⁹

What Can and Should Christians Do?

Haiti's dire socioeconomic situation demands a response on the part of the church.

Haitian-American church leaders are compelled as Christians to take an active role in addressing the poverty dilemma in Haiti. Numerous biblical examples underscore the call for Christian leaders to care for the poor and needy. Whatever Paul Collier and other economists have to say to the challenge of poverty, the Bible surely adds a strong, unavoidable call to action. A few examples follow.

During a famine in Jerusalem, Paul organized and sent a group of believers to collect funds from other churches in Macedonia to help the saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor 9:1-5).

The Apostle James urged church leaders to put their faith in action by practicing "true religion," which consists of visiting the orphans and the widows (Jas 1:27). James

⁸ The Group of 8 originated with a 1975 summit hosted by France that brought together representatives from France, West Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. Canada was added in 1976 and Russia participated between 1998 and 2014, when it was suspended. "Factbox: The Group of Eight: what is it?" *Reuters*, July 3, 2008, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2008/07/03/us-g8-group-idUKB26280520080703?sp=true> (accessed February 4, 2015).

⁹ Fatton, *Haiti: Trapped*, 102.

went further to challenge leaders to put their faith to work by providing food for the hungry, clothing for the naked, and a home for the homeless (Jas 2:14-18).

Jesus Christ challenged his followers to care for the poor and the hungry as he did himself many times during his earthly ministry. He said:

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me' (Mt 25:37-40).

Jesus Christ's second great commandment also demands immediate action in behalf of one's neighbor.¹⁰ The parable of the Good Samaritan further emphasizes this commandment with the call to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (Lk 10:27).

Psalm 41:1-3 also encourages it in this manner:

Blessed are those who have regard for the weak;
the Lord delivers them in times of trouble.
The Lord protects and preserves them—
they are counted among the blessed in the land—
he does not give them over to the desire of their foes.
The Lord sustains them on their sickbed
and restores them from their bed of illness.

Strategies for Haitian-American Church Leaders to Address Socioeconomic Needs

After describing major causes of suffering of the Haitian people, there comes a critical question: To what extent can Haitian-American Christian leaders help their Haitian brothers and sisters satisfy their socio-economic needs in Haiti and in the United

¹⁰ See Mark 12:31.

States? How could Haitian-American Church leaders equip themselves to assist in the most effective way those needy Haitians in the U.S as well as in Haiti?

Following are some techniques and strategies for Haitian-American church leaders to help Haitians in need—both in the U.S. and in Haiti.

Poverty relief efforts by a common front of Haitian-American church leaders could be patterned after the model established by World Vision, a Christian non-profit organization that promotes long-term solutions to alleviate poverty. World Vision's mission is to work with "children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice."¹¹

World Vision has employed different programs to combat poverty, including equipping poor farmers to grow sustainable food, providing adequate medical care to millions of people dying of different diseases, and by bringing economic development to many families through microloans and child sponsorship. Since 1950, World Vision has disbursed 1,177,745 microloans in 36 countries.¹²

A successful initiative by Haitian church leaders to alleviate poverty in Haiti requires trust, cooperation, unity, professionalism, humility, love, integrity, and abandonment of self-interest.

We can sum up the philosophy for improving the lives of impoverished Haitians with two proverbs. The first, a Haitian proverb: "*Min anpil, chaj pa lou*," which translates to: lots of helping hands lessen the load. The second is the well-known Chinese proverb

¹¹ World Vision, "Who We Are," World Vision, <http://www.worldvision.org/about-us/who-we-are> (accessed February 4, 2015).

¹² World Vision, "Economic Development," World Vision, <http://www.worldvision.org/our-impact/economic-development> (accessed February 4, 2015).

that says: “it is better to teach someone how to catch a fish than to give that person a fish every day.”

The Apostle Paul evoked the intrinsic value of work to the Thessalonian church by urging them to excel still “more, and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody” (1 Thes 4:10-12).

It is crucial for church leaders to follow the adage of the Apostle Paul and foster self-reliance and economic development among poor Haitians living in the U.S. as well as in Haiti.

A successful church program to foster economic growth among marginalized Haitian immigrants in the U.S. and underprivileged persons in Haiti might include: entrepreneurship; micro lending; job skills training; literacy and sponsorship programs; community development, farming and livestock; health education and disease prevention; and use of international aid.

Entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship programs include initiatives like having a qualified business teacher lead a church-program teaching individuals how to write a business plan in order to create, start, and run a profitable small business; or enrolling individuals in accredited institutions like the Gordon-Conwell Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME) to take a course on Entrepreneurship.

Micro lending. In order to finance small businesses in poverty-stricken communities, church officers could seek grants from the U.S. government, the United Nations, or non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other financial sources like

churches (starting with their own members), or community banks. Loans would be contingent upon recipients completing an Entrepreneurship course and borrowers would be accountable for repaying the loan at very low interest rates.

In 2012, after completing the Entrepreneurship class attached with a small loan at CUME, four participants from the Anointed Baptist Church in Hyde Park, MA (of which the author is a reverend) each started their own small business. Two of those businesses—one a photography business and the other a catering enterprise—are still profitable.

Job Skills Training: Church leaders could refer jobless people to other institutions or put in place a training program where participants could learn computer skills, resume writing, and successful interviewing. They could also help underemployed persons find grants to learn in-demand trades such as plumber, electrician, nursing-aide, pharmacist technician, office manager or mechanic.

One successful example of this: Through the Anointed Baptist Church, a married couple newly arrived from Haiti was referred to an Adult Learning Center where both husband and wife learned to speak and write English as a second language. The wife later became a certified Nursing Assistant after completing a yearlong program.

Literacy and Sponsorship Programs: A united front of Haitian-American church leaders could create and support literacy programs in key communities in Haiti. For instance, through EDeKHA (Education and Development of Kids in Haiti), a non-profit organization, the Anointed Baptist Church of Hyde Park has been supporting the Academic Center of Sucrierie Henrie, a school in St. Louis du Sud, Haiti where free

education and meals have been provided every school day to 350 underprivileged children.

Community Development, Farming and Livestock. U.S.-based church leaders could find qualified and experienced technicians in farming to volunteer to teach Haitian farmers effective farming techniques. In addition, programs donating domestic animals such as chickens, goats, cows or sheep could be beneficial.

Health Education and Disease Prevention in Haiti. Haitian-American pastors can work together and coordinate their efforts to provide community wells in different communities in Haiti for safe drinking water. They could also organize mobile clinics to teach people about disease prevention, and to provide medical care.

International Aid. International assistance can play a key role in Haiti's economic recovery and development. For instance, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been focusing on Haiti's economic recovery and growth after the earthquake of January 2010.

A recent report in the journal *Americas* states:

IMF is now working on a range of projects such as an initiative in partnership with The Coca-Cola Company, the Clinton-Bush Haiti Fund, and USAID to improve the incomes and productivity of 25,000 Haitian mango farmers. The goal is to create more opportunities to reduce poverty by generating jobs and businesses. As part of its efforts to penetrate new markets, INDEPCO (a non-profit organization) is working on training Haitian tailors and seamstresses in sewing and embroidery techniques that can enable them to make higher value clothing and fashion accessories. In Haiti, there are more than 130,000 Haitian small businesses and micro entrepreneurs that depend on microcredit to finance their activities.”¹³

¹³ Inter-American Development Bank, “Rebuilding Haiti,” *Américas* 63, no. 1 (2011): 26-31.

Addressing Haitian Poverty & Corruption with Biblical Values

A great deal of Haitian poverty is related to, even caused by, ongoing corruption and injustice. I believe there is a crying need for justice and righteousness, not just compassion. This section will focus on Biblical values that could benefit today's workplaces and businesses. As Haitian church leaders teach their congregations how to resist temptation and evils in the workplace, their followers can in turn shine like lights in the darkness.

There is endemic and systematic corruption across the board in Haitian society. Haitian poverty and corruption are directly interrelated. In 2014, Haiti was ranked the thirteenth most corrupt country in the world on the International Corruption Perception Index.¹⁴

On the effects of corruption on poverty and inequality, Gupta et al. found that "corruption increases poverty through lower economic growth rates, biased tax systems which lead to a widening disparity between the rich and the poor, poor implementation of social programs, lower welfare spending and unequal access to education."¹⁵

Corruption has further hindered economic recovery in Haiti as it has diminished donor confidence. Nancy Roc describes how "international donors have been slow to assist Haiti, mainly due to widespread corruption and structural problems present in the

¹⁴ "Corruption Perception Index 2014," Transparency International, <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2014/results> (accessed February 4, 2015).

¹⁵ Sanjeev Gupta, Hamid Reza Davoodi, Rosa Maria Alonso Terme, and International Monetary Fund Fiscal Affairs Department, "Does Corruption Affect Income Inequality and Poverty?" *IMF Working Papers* 98, no.76 (1998): 4-5.

country. Overseas charitable organizations have contributed more than \$2.6 billion of aid to Haiti since 1994, of which any obvious benefits have yet to be seen.”¹⁶

In his book, *Haiti: Trapped in the Outer Periphery*, Robert Fatton notes that though foreign donors sought to bypass the corruption they knew existed in Haitian governments, “such corruption and incompetence are not inevitable.” Fatton adds that corruption can also exist in non-governmental organizations (NGO) and cited the Disaster Accountability Project (DAP)—which found that “most NGOs operating in Haiti lacked transparency and failed to report their received donations and expenses, and did not assess the result of their work.”¹⁷

Corruption in public and private institutions in Haiti is well documented. Fatton reports the revelations of the well-known Dominican journalist, Nuria Piera, that Haitian government officials received more than \$2 million in bribes from a powerful senator in the Dominican Republic whose companies were awarded contracts for the reconstruction of Haiti after the earthquake of January 12, 2010.

Corruption in the Haitian Political and Legal System

As noted in the International Crisis Group’s *Latin America and Caribbean Briefing Journal*, over the last thirty years, Haiti’s history has been fraught with corruption, dysfunctional State governance, and a series of coups d’état associated with political violence including killings, injustice, unlawful imprisonment, human rights violations, and a massive exile of political rivals. Corruption in Haitian politics extends to

¹⁶ Roc, “Haiti: The Bitter Grapes,” 8.

¹⁷ Fatton, *Haiti: Trapped*, 164.

the Haitian justice system. In fact, that same journal reported that, “Haiti’s justice system remains dysfunctional and continues to pose significant obstacles to its democratic process, security, reconstruction and development. While some steps have begun with regard to the police, institutional reform in the sector has lagged, allowing further impunity and persistent criminal threats to citizen safety.”¹⁸ (International Crisis Group).

Under a weakened justice system, the protection of human rights remains a challenge in Haiti, particularly for women and minorities.

An article featured in the *Amnesty International Journal* describes how the Haitian government has “so far failed to establish a strong legal framework, based on international human rights standards, that is capable of guaranteeing the right to unimpeded access to justice for the victims of human rights in Haiti for many years to come and will continue to undermine progress made in other fields.”¹⁹

Further, the United Nations Human Rights Committee reports that

...while cases of gender-based violence, specifically rape, are increasingly making their way onto the courts’ dockets, the Haitian justice system still presents many structural (corruption, long procedure, and lack of resources) and social barriers that discriminate against female complainants at each level of the process and discourage women and girls from formally seeking justice. Additionally, unrepresented women’s cases are rarely heard due to disorganization and corruption; cases are often prioritized based on whether bribes are available to the judges or clerks taking the case.”²⁰

¹⁸ International Crisis Group, “Keeping Haiti Safe: Justice Reform,” Latin America/Caribbean Briefing No. 27, Oct. 27, 2011, International Crisis Group, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/latin-america-caribbean/haiti/b027-keeping-haiti-safe-justice-reform.aspx> (accessed February 4, 2015).

¹⁹ Amnesty International, “Haiti: Still Crying for Justice,” *Amnesty International Journal* June 30, 1998.

²⁰ UN Human Rights Committee, “ICCPR Violations in the Context of the Cholera Epidemic in Haiti,” Republic of Haiti Submission for the 112th Session of the Human Rights Committee Hearing, October 8 & 9, 2014: Review of Haiti’s Report under the

From Material to Spiritual: The Impact of Voodoo

Throughout their history, Haitian people have been oppressed not only by dictators, but first and foremost by the phenomenon of Voodoo. This is important because overcoming injustice and corruption will require a strong, solid moral framework and foundation. Voodoo will never provide such a framework. In fact it will undermine it. This is a spiritual problem and challenge. So how has Voodoo contributed to the corruption of the socio-politico-spiritual affairs of Haiti?

At the end of the 17th century A.D., blacks were uprooted from their homelands in Central and West Africa and shipped to Haiti as slaves to work in sugar cane, coffee, banana, and indigo plantations. African slaves who were brought to Haiti remained connected to their African beliefs, culture, customs, traditions and roots, including their Voodoo religion—though the Roman Catholic faith was forced upon their conscience by their slave masters to weaken any form of community resistance.²¹

In his book, *Le Vaudou a la Lumiere de la Bible*, Lauture Magloire quotes French philosopher Jacques Ellul, who described the way Catholicism accepted elements of voodoo religion into itself:

On admet généralement que l'expansion du christianisme a été moins rapide et moins générale que les historiens du 19^{eme} siècle ne pouvaient le dire. Les campagnes sont restées assez païennes. Il s'est alors produit une sorte d'amalgame entre croyance chrétienne et croyances païennes, correspondant à une foi populaire. Il était possible d'arracher aux paysans leur croyance, l'Eglise a

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Sept. 12, 2014, <http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/HTI> (accessed February 4, 2015).

²¹ Leslie Gérard Desmangles, "The Maroon Republics and Religious Diversity in Colonial Haiti," *Anthropos* 85, no. 4/6 (1990): 475–482.

préférent l'absorber en baptisant le génie du lieu et en le faisant entrer dans la configuration globale des saints.²²

After centuries of colonial and imperialist influences, Voodoo has become, as Laguerre observes, a “syncretic religion” with practices and spirituality from Roman Catholicism, Freemasonry, Rosicrucian, and Greco-Roman and Indian mysticism.²³

Haitian Voodooists have dedicated their worship services to the spirits called Loas. Léon-François Hoffman, in *Haiti: Couleur, Croyances, Créole*, explains:

In the Voodoo pantheon, each ‘Loa’ or spirit represents a god and is amazingly connected to a Roman Catholic saint. That is why today in Haiti, most of the time a Voodoo priest is simultaneously a professed Catholic believer. In addition, it is quite similar the way that the Voodoo practitioners and the Catholics worship, which is a result of the socio-cultural affinity between those two religions.²⁴

Though it is difficult to estimate the number of Voodooists in Haiti, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency estimated that more than half of Haitian people practice the Voodoo religion.²⁵

According to Laguerre, the most historically significant Voodoo ceremony took place on the night of August 14, 1791 on the hill of Bois Caiman where Boukman, a slave and Voodoo priest, plunged a long knife into the throat of a black pig to get the blood of a pact made with Satan, the father of the spirits called ‘loas.’ All those present

²² Lauture Magloire, *Le Vaudou a la Lumiere de la Bible* (Port-au-Prince: Édition Le Béréen, 2007), 153.

²³ Michel S. Laguerre, *Voodoo and Politics in Haiti* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 38.

²⁴ Léon-François Hoffmann, *Haïti : Couleurs, Croyances, Créole* (Port-au-Prince: Editions H. Deschamps, Centre International de Documentation et d'Information Haïtienne, Caribéenne et Afro-canadienne, 1990). Quoted in Magloire, *Le Vaudou*, 154.

²⁵ U. S. Central Intelligence Agency, “Haiti,” *The World Factbook 2013-14*, Central Intelligence Agency, 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html> (accessed February 4, 2015).

pledged themselves to the fight for freedom against French rule by drinking from a cup full of pig's blood. This ritual is believed to have begun the Haitian revolution—which eventually led to the war of independence against the French colonialist army on November 18, 1803.²⁶

I believe that this politico-religious ceremony marked the beginning of a satanic era dominating at all levels and every sector of Haitian society including its culture, its politics, beliefs, history, way of life, academia, government, institutions, and mostly, the workplace. We can see why voodoo is so deeply entrenched when it is linked so intimately with the proudest moment of Haitian history: its successful revolution against the French colonial oppressors.

Laguerre notes the use of Voodoo by national politicians and the participation of Voodoo priests in national and local politics. According to Laguerre,

The fact that the slaves were constantly exposed to possible retaliation by the French surely motivated the slave-maroons to turn to their Voodoo Loas (spirits) for protection. . . . The use of Voodoo in politics by the Duvaliers, also called Papa-Doc and Baby-Doc, helped them to oppress, exploit, and control the nation during their twenty-nine years as dictators and presidents in Haiti. After winning the Haitian presidential election in 1957, the late Francois Duvalier (Papa Doc) brought Voodoo in full swing into the open in the political process by co-opting Voodoo priests and by openly sponsoring Voodoo liturgies even in the presidential palace on behalf of the nation and his government.²⁷

In his book, *Voodoo in Haiti*, Dr. Andre Louis states that through Voodoo the demonic activities are manifest. The Loas can fully control and inhabit the body of a Voodooist practitioner and can take full control of their victims. Louis also believes that Voodoo has been a source of misery for the Haitians. The Voodoo adepts, in order to

²⁶ Laguerre, *Voodoo*, 60-61.

²⁷ Laguerre, *Voodoo*, 101-103.

avoid calamity, must accomplish Voodoo rites—which often requires selling their belongings and property. They are bound to perform animal sacrifices to please the Loas.²⁸

Harold Courlander explains,

The Voodoo sons or daughters can be possessed, or mounted by any particular Loa (Voodoo spirit) among the Voodoo deities such as Ogou Feraille (god of war); Chango (god of thunder); Gede (god of sex and death); Ezilie Freda (the protector of the home); and Dambala Grand Chemin (Protector of Voodoo children). Being possessed and losing control of all motor skills, the individual experiences spasmodic convulsions, eventually falling into a state of semi-consciousness, with his or her will substituted by the Loa.²⁹

Corruption in the Haitian Workplace

Instances of corruption in the Haitian workplace are rampant. The United Nations Human Rights Committee, under the Labor and Employment section, has noted the following deficiencies under the Haitian labor and justice systems.³⁰

1. Limited remedies for sexual harassment in the workplace. Sexual harassment is not prohibited under Haiti's labor code, and is instead counted as discrimination based on gender. Cases of discrimination have been reported but are likely underreported.
2. Failure to ensure labor and employment rights. Human rights not currently ensured under Haitian law include: the right to unionize, the right to equality

²⁸ Andre J. Louis, *Voodoo in Haiti: Catholicism, Protestantism and a Model of Effective Ministry in the Context of Voodoo in Haiti* (Mustang, OK: Tate Publishing & Enterprises, 1984).

²⁹ Harold Courlander, *Haiti Singing* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1973), 30.

³⁰ UN Human Rights Committee, "ICCPR Violations," <http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/HTI> (accessed February 4, 2015).

before the law, the right to legal remedy, women's right to self-determination and equal enjoyment of women's civil and political rights.

3. Discrimination against workers. Workers are often excluded from the courts and public and private employers generally enjoy impunity for labor and employment violations. There is a lack of qualified lawyers willing to represent low-wage workers.
4. Union suppression and low wages. Haiti has the third lowest monthly wages in the apparel industry, and the Government has prevented workers from organizing for higher wages. Hundreds of workers were suspended or terminated for their protest in December 2013 against low wages. Terminated workers generally have little or no legal recourse due to the difficulties of bringing cases before labor courts.

A great deal of Haitian poverty is caused by ongoing corruption, injustice, and unfairness in the Haitian economy. There is a crying need for justice and righteousness, not just compassion. To counter this, I believe that Haitian-American church leaders have a spiritual mandate and a moral obligation to promptly respond to corruption in the Haitian economy. Haitian church leaders need to teach Biblical values and train their congregants to represent God at the workplace, as the light of the world and salt of the earth.³¹

³¹ Matthew 5:13-16.

Biblical Values to Benefit the Haitian Economy and Workplace

Based upon Ephesians 6:12, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms,” we can witness the manifestation of Satan and his agents through the use of different means, such as drugs and crime, to inflict suffering on society, and strategies involving lies and wickedness to spoil cultures and infect workplaces around the world. In the Haitian economy, the devil has become the master of workers’ minds and the lord of workplaces that are filled with injustice, unfairness, wrongdoing, and corruption. However, there are millions of Christian workers performing next to the non-Christian laborers every day in the same workplaces.

Jesus taught his disciples:

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Mt 5:13-16).

Being the light of the world, Christians have been challenged by the Apostle Paul in this manner:

Therefore do not be partners with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret” (Eph 5:7-12).

Based on this charge, the saints in the church need to be reminded of their position in Christ, and to be equipped to resist temptation and evils in the workplace. Christian

church leaders need to teach their congregants that they are the light of their workplace. As a result, they have to show the light by exercising a positive influence through their character, their love, their kindness and goodness, and work ethics that reflect Christ himself.

Jesus used salt as an analogy to help his auditors grasp the spiritual meaning of his heavenly teaching. Common sea salt is a mineral substance made of sodium chloride (NaCl). In the absence of ice, salt has been used since antiquity as a preserving agent to maintain the freshness of meat and to prevent it from spoiling. Moreover, salt has been used as a cleansing agent against harmful organisms, and as a purifying agent in medicine, and as a healing or antimicrobial agent. Salt is also a taste enhancer in food. A recipe without salt is incomplete, or insipid.

As recipes need salt to become flavorful, the workplace needs true Christian believers. Workers who are overwhelmed and physically exhausted; or stressed by high demands on the job; or exploited by an unfair labor system; or sexually harassed; or victims of prejudice, racism, favoritism, and bullying; these workers may lose sight of the purpose of work, doubt the dignity of work, and even dismiss the good reason for living altogether.

Downtrodden workers need a Christian coworker or an agent of workplace ministry and discipleship to stand with them in difficult moments and to help them ascribe value to work. Indeed, victimized workers need someone to help them find meaning in life again, and help them to regain strength and retain their human dignity in the workplace. The workplace is a golden opportunity for a Christian agent to offer the

hope of Christ and tell the workers that Jesus Christ, the Lord of work, said, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28).

Haitian-American Christian church leaders need to prepare the saints and raise agents to act as the salt of the workplace by enhancing the taste of life for their desperate coworkers; and to do so with a caring, respectful, loving, merciful, open-hearted, non-threatening, and Christ-like attitude.

In addition to adding flavor and preserving food, salt also creates thirst and a pressing need for water in human body. Likewise, the more care, mercy, support, time, spiritual insight, and love an agent offers to a coworker in need, the more that coworker is going to ask for support, and the more he or she is going to inquire of Jesus Christ. The thirst for love and care will increase in the workplace with the presence of the saints there.

The believer in the workplace is what the salt is to the meat. When the workplace becomes epidemically and morally contagious, infected, and spoiled with corruption, bribery, unfairness, racism, exploitation, sexual immorality, and theft, the saints need to be taught Biblical values that will help them resist temptations in the workplace. Haitian-American church leaders can prepare a curriculum or a series of sermons to equip their parishioners to resist temptation in the workplace.

Biblical Teachings as a Foundation for Workplace Integrity

As they are taught lessons from Decalogue in Exodus 20:1-17, saints and parishioners will learn strong Biblical values that they can employ to impact the workplace for God. The bank teller will be able to resist the temptation to steal, because the Decalogue teaches: you shall not steal (Ex 20:15). The hospital housekeeper will be

able to resist the temptation to take hospital linens and cleaning products, because the Decalogue teaches: you shall not steal (Ex 20:15).

The nurse and the physician will be able to resist the temptation to mistreat, misdiagnose, and physically abuse the patient, because the Lord demands:

Defend the weak and the fatherless;
uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.
Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked (Ps 82:3-4).

The accountant will resist the temptation to lie in order to get a higher return and a higher profit, because the Decalogue teaches: you shall not bear false witness (Ex 20:16 NKJV).

The mechanic will resist the temptation of overcharging and exploiting the women, the elderly, and the immigrants for car parts and labor. The mechanic will benefit from the Proverb that says,

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves,
for the rights of all who are destitute.
Speak up and judge fairly;
defend the rights of the poor and needy (Prov 31:8-9).

The financial planner will resist the temptation to steal the retirement funds of hard-working men and women. The taxi driver will resist the temptation to de-regulate the meter or falsify the cab fares. The job owner will resist the temptation to exploit immigrants and minorities by underpaying them or giving them no benefits. The employer will resist the temptation to promote physically attractive workers for sexual favors. The mechanical engineer will influence the auto industry to stop making faulty car designs that cause the death of innocent people. The church worker, the priest, and minister will resist the temptation to practice adultery and sexual abuse of minors because

the Decalogue said: “You shall not commit adultery” (Ex 20:14). The patron will resist the temptation to violate workers’ rights by protecting their right to unionize, and will shine for Christ by defending the workers’ rights to have a fair wage and by protecting them from physical and sexual abuses in the workplaces in Haiti, as well as in the U.S.

Teaching Biblical Values to Voodooists

In addition, Haitian-American leaders need to face and overcome the corruption Voodoo has caused in both Haiti and the U.S. Biblical values must be preached and taught at the church to equip congregants. Haitian saints should be taught that the worship of Voodoo spirits (Loas), including superstitions, magical and mystical practices, is pure idolatry, which God forbids. They must learn from the Apostle Paul’s teaching: “You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols (1 Cor 12:2). He continues: “No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord’s table and the table of demons. Are we trying to arouse the Lord’s jealousy? Are we stronger than he?” (1 Cor 10:20-22).

To those Haitian Protestants who are practicing a syncretic religion, the words of Jesus Christ instruct: “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money” (Mt 6:24). Our God is a jealous God who rejects idolatry. In Exodus 20:3-5, we read:

You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the

waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me (Ex 20:3-5).

The saints must also know that they need to repent from practicing hidden idolatry and syncretism to avoid God's judgment. Revelation 2:14-16 has the following warning:

Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin so that they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality. Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth (Rev 2:14-16).

To Haitian Protestants adopting occult practices, we can apply the scripture in Deuteronomy 18:9-13 regulating the relationship between God and his people,

When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD; because of these same detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the LORD your God (Deut 18:9-13).

I agree with Louis that Haitian misery has a lot to do with the Voodoo beliefs and practices adopted by the majority of Haitians, inasmuch as even poor Voodooists in Haiti are obligated by oath to sell their possessions to offer annual and sporadic sacrifices for protection and luck, and live under the rules of the Voodoo 'Loa' that oppress and possess them. It is a grave sin for a people to turn their back on the Almighty God to serve a false god. "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images" (Isa 42:8 NKJV).

I believe that the poverty of Haiti is connected to the corrupt spiritual state of most Haitians and their rejection of God our Creator. “Behold the Lord’s hand is not so short that it cannot save; nor is his ear so dull that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear” (Isa 59:1-2 NASB).

Hope through Workplace Ministry

There is yet hope for Haiti to experience full spiritual and economic recovery by giving up its corrupt way and repenting from its sins: “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (2 Chr 7:14).

The workplace remains the best opportunity for believers to impact the lives of their fellow workers for the advancement of God’s kingdom on earth. The majority of Christians spend an average of 8 hours a day, 40 hours a week, a total of at least 2000 hours at work for an average of 49 weeks a year. Consequently, a Christian who works for 50 years would spend 2450 weeks or 100,000 hours among non-Christian workers.

During his ministry on earth, the Lord Jesus Christ appointed seventy-two disciples and sent them two-by-two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves” (Lk 10:2-3).

The Bible lists few occasions on which Jesus wept. Looking at Jerusalem, he wept over the disobedience of his people: “As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it” (Lk 19:41). Later he said, “This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” (Mt 24:14).

The Great Commission calls us to go all over the world to preach the Gospel, make disciples of all nations by baptizing them and teaching them to obey the whole counsel of the Word of God (Mt 28:18-20).

A Model for Workplace Ministry

In their book, *Workplace Grace: Becoming a Spiritual Influence at Work* Bill Peel and Walt Larimore write: “If people are really hungry and I have food to offer, why aren’t people buying? As hostile and uninterested as some people may seem towards the Christianity they know about through the media, millions have a gnawing hunger.”³²

Peel and Larimore encourage observant Christians to join in the process of drawing men and women to Christ in the workplace, a mission field where they can also express their faith to non-believers in a non-threatening and respectful way. While the authors emphasize the sacredness of the secular workplace, they believe saints can be witnesses for God anywhere in the world including the workplace, which is considered to be secular, but is in reality God’s sacred ground, and a priority for His missionaries to harvest.

³² Bill Peel and Walt Larimore, *Workplace Grace: Becoming a Spiritual Influence at Work*, 2nd ed. (Longview, Texas: Le Tourneau University Press, 2014), 48.

Workplace Grace offers what I believe is a good model for Haitian church leaders to follow in their evangelism efforts in the workplace. Key approaches recommended in the book include the following.

- Knowing and understanding coworkers and their backgrounds before seeking to meet spiritual needs.
- Sharing the gospel by being courteous and rendering service to non-believers.
- Presenting brief, simple and authentic faith stories in a clear language.
- Approaching evangelism through a cohesive team effort.
- Building on common interests and common ground.
- Beginning evangelism efforts with prayer.

Four Kinds of “Workplace Salt”

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Professor Dr. David W. Gill has invited church leaders to adopt the following practices and goals in workplace ministry, which he describes as four kinds of “workplace salt.”

1. Prayer. The Lord’s Prayer (Mt 6:9-13) serves as the guiding scripture for this workplace salt. Gill recommends that leaders ask: What are we doing, and what could we do, to encourage prayer by and for workplace disciples? If we don’t pray, we are in effect saying we don’t especially need God to come alongside us into our workplace. No, prayer, asking God to help us and use us, is the first critical step in salting our workplaces.
2. Evangelism. In his second epistle to the Corinthians, Paul calls his disciples to be “ambassadors for Christ” (2 Cor 5:19-20). The guiding question for

evangelism efforts is: What are we doing and what could we do, to encourage evangelism and faith or introductions of Jesus in the workplace? If we don't recognize the spiritual battlefield in our workplaces, if we don't somehow invite our colleagues to turn from voodoo and money-worship to the true God, we will miss a critical part of salting the workplace.

3. Model: Be a good example. First Peter 2:12 states a charge for believers to conduct themselves honorably among non-believers.³³ As they strive to be good examples, church leaders can ask: What are the most important ways (language and behavior) that Christians need to preserve a good example, and be good models in the workplace? What are we doing to encourage and support our workplace disciples? Christians must be known for their good and ethical conduct, refusing to participate in corruption, theft, abuse, or other wrong behavior. We must walk our faith, not just talk it.
4. Share insights on the meaning and nature of work and money, healthy organizations and corporate cultures, ethical guidelines and wise decision-making and servant leadership. Guiding questions for this exercise can include: What are we doing to prepare our workplace disciples to know and share biblically rooted insights in their workplaces?

Bridging the Faith-Work Gap

The Bible commands that Christ's followers make Jesus Lord of the whole of their lives. It is an imperative of faith for the saints to connect their faith to their work

³³ "Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us" (1 Pet 2:12).

from Monday to Friday, to bridge the faith-gap between Sunday morning and Monday morning.

As Haitian-American Christian church leaders teach the full counsel of the Word of God to their saints, they will prepare the saints to make an impact and improve the lives of their fellow men and women by sharing Biblical values amidst corruption.

The Bible offers many examples of those who maintained a strong moral stance in challenging work environments.

In his book, *The Accidental Executive*, Dr. Albert Erisman describes how Joseph was able to connect his faith to his work by honoring God and incarnating transparency, honesty, and integrity while fulfilling his duties in Pharaoh's court. Joseph also granted grace and forgiveness to the brothers who had once wronged him. As a leader, Joseph was able to overcome the temptation of sex, money, and power because of his authentic faith in and relationship with God.³⁴

The prophet Daniel was another spiritual giant who honored God by connecting his faith to his work while captive in Babylon. Surrounded by an idolatrous culture, Daniel still displayed godly behavior. Daniel's loyalty to God was remarkable when he resolved not to eat the food and meat sacrificed to idols. Daniel's spiritual conviction allowed him to perform his tasks without compromising his faith in the workplace.³⁵

³⁴ Albert M. Erisman, *The Accidental Executive: Lessons on Business, Faith, and Calling from the Life of Joseph* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2015); see also Genesis 39-45.

³⁵ See Daniel 2:8-15.

Christian faith isn't just about church or family life; it is also about connecting our faith to work. As Paul said, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31). Amen!

Surely, Christian workers and professionals will perform their tasks among those who have different beliefs and who often dismiss what Christians believe is morally right. Christians must make a difference by pleasing our Lord, who said, "For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 5:20).

Haitian-American Christian church leaders must equip the saints to do work that glorifies God. The work that glorifies God should create new services and job opportunities for the common good of the community, provide a new way of shaping people's lives for the best, and build bridges between the poor and the rich, between poverty and opportunity, and between faith and work.

Saints must avoid any evil behavior, such as racism, favoritism, exploitation, bribery, sexual harassment, robbery, corruption, laziness, or prejudice. The saints' work performance should not contradict their faith in the workplace; rather their work and behavior should encourage coworkers to embrace the Christian faith.

In their book, *Your Work Matters to God*, Doug Sherman and William Hendricks state that God expects the saints to act in a manner pleasing to him as they fulfill their tasks in the workplace. The authors exhort readers to hate evil, and to do whatever possible to promote good while connecting faith to work.³⁶

³⁶ Sherman, Doug and William Hendricks, *Your Work Matters to God* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1987), 149.

The Apostle Paul also urged, “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom 12:21).

Robert Banks describes this process as “bridging the faith-work gap.” He proposes a Business Owner’s Mission, in which workers glorify God through their work. He describes examples of workers glorifying God, including a Christian in a Car Sales Firm; a banker who becomes a prophet, priest, and king while reflecting Christ in the Banking Industry; a teacher who educates children while reflecting Christ’s incarnation by being a revealer and role model; a farmer who becomes a Re-Settler by cultivating and connecting in the real World; a Craft worker as a Marketplace by forming a co-operative on early church principles.³⁷

I believe that our Christianity compels us not only to behave as God’s people, but also to present our work as a holy sacrifice to God. We need to represent God in the workplace and be his icons, so that non-Christians can see and experience the work of our faith and the labor of our love in the workplace.

Haitian Churches and Haitian-American Churches

We have described the situation of the Haitian church. How does this relate to the Haitian-American church? First of all, some of the same problems that we see in Haiti are present in the American workplace, especially the worship of the false god of Mammon. A workplace ministry that gets hammered out in the Haitian-American context will be an essential training for making an impact in Haiti. Second, Haitian-Americans have contacts, networks, and cultural savvy that prepare them, better than Christians from

³⁷ Robert J. Banks, *Faith Goes to Work* (New York: Alban Institute, 1993).

other subcultures, to go back to Haiti and work alongside Christians there on workplace ministry and discipleship. Obviously the shared language (French and Creole) is a great asset. Mobilizing and teaching Haitian-American pastors and churches about workplace discipleship is thus a key to impact in Haiti itself.

CHAPTER TWO

Resources for a New Haitian Workplace Ministry Initiative

As mentioned in Chapter One, no examples could be found of Haitian church-based workplace ministry, discipleship, evangelism, or other training programs. We are in uncharted territory here. As an initial foray into the subject matter of workplace ministry, two two-hour workshop sessions for local, Boston-area Haitian-American Christian church leaders were held at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary's Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME) campus in the Roxbury neighborhood (November 22, 2014 and January 17, 2015).

The purpose of the first workshop was to explore the absence of workplace ministry and discipleship in Haitian communities. During that workshop, I asked leaders their thoughts about the importance of preparing saints for workplace ministry. During the workshop, ten Haitian leaders were put in two different groups to discuss the barriers and challenges facing workplace ministry and discipleship and how to overcome them. Later on, Dr. David Gill presented his "Four Ways to Salt the Workplace" approach (reviewed in Chapter One above). At the conclusion of the workshop, church leaders were asked to fill out an informal survey assessing the need for workplace ministry.

The second workshop had four attendees and explored strategies and tools that might be used or developed to help the saints not only to connect their faith to their work, but also to bring people to Christ in the workplace. At the end, leaders were once again asked about their sense of the importance of such a workplace discipleship training

emphasis. Without exception they expressed strong support and strong interest in planting in their churches the seed of Workplace Ministry and Discipleship.

Literature Review

In the absence of experts to interview and programs to visit, the best resource for this thesis-project became a review of Christian books on the subject matter of workplace ministry and discipleship. Ten of the most important and relevant of these books for the development of a curriculum on workplace evangelism for Haitian Christian church leaders are summarized here.

1: In *Church on Sunday, Work on Monday*, Laura Nash and Scotty McLennan explore the gap between people's "Sunday" faith and their "Monday" work.¹ The authors describe the challenges of reconciling Christian values with life in the workplace and offer strategies to overcome those challenges.

Nash and McLennan explore the disconnect that exists between two worlds: church and the workplace. They describe how Christian workers often put forth their best effort at work, while their faith is hindered as they face barriers, stereotypes and challenges. As a result, a gap is formed between faith and work, between church life and business life, and between Christian institutions and the workplace. The workplace, according to the authors, has become hostile to religion and religious principles to the point where religious contributions are unwelcome, even in codes of ethics and company policies.

¹ Laura L. Nash and Scotty McLennan, *Church on Sunday, Work on Monday: the Challenge of Fusing Christian Values with Business Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001).

To address this disconnect, the authors present strategies to reconcile religion and business, to enable the saints to make their faith part of their whole work experience and make Christ the master of their work life. The reconciliation between religion and work life, according to Nash and McLennan, is only made possible through (1) improving communication between church and business, (2) overcoming negative stereotypes, and (3) resolving the problem of language and pluralism in the workplace. This can only be done, the authors say, when the church takes the responsibility to prepare their saints with feasible strategies to express their personal faith at work.

Nash and McLennan have done some excellent research and their book is good for advanced students. On a congregational level however, overcoming the Sunday-Monday gap in the Haitian churches will be most effectively pursued through teaching and preaching the biblical texts on workplace faithfulness—and by showing living examples of how to take faith to work.

2: In *Faith Goes to Work*, Robert Banks² describes how he felt his church had never offered any lessons on how to minister in his daily work, nor provided any support to him as a steel company manager for over thirty years. Banks urges that saints consider the Sunday-Monday gap and be thoughtful of their workplaces in the context of the divine economy. Many churches are resistant to promote workplace ministry, Banks finds. Resistance to connect work and religious life, he suggests, stems from the pressure of life and family obligations. Without proper teaching from the church about the divine nature of work, the author believes, the saints would be unlikely to take on the responsibility to connect their faith to their work. *Faith Goes to Work* includes practical materials for

² Robert J. Banks, *Faith Goes to Work* (New York: Alban Institute, 1993).

building a curriculum on workplace ministry and hands-on resources to use in small group discussions. Banks's approach points in the direction we need for the Haitian churches: teaching and training programs.

3: Reluctance to promote workplace ministry is a topic explored by William E. Diehl in *The Monday Connection*.³ Diehl denounces the fact that American Christian churches seem to ignore the faith-work disconnect in the lives of the saints. The church, according to Diehl, has shown no interest in helping Christian believers in that aspect. The author describes five ways for the saints to establish a faith-work connection: (1) the ministry of competency, (2) the ministry of presence, (3) the ministry of ethics, (4) the ministry of change, and (5) the ministry of values. Each of these ministries is described in the next paragraphs.

First, through the ministry of competency in the workplace, Christians can witness their faith through the quality of their work. According to the author, work is a part of God's plan for humankind. "We are called on to continue God's creative process through the work that we do," Diehl says. "The greatest witness of our faith in our workplace is our degree of competency. Unless we are competent, our witness as Christians is not seriously received by the world."⁴ This is an extremely important point. There has been so much corruption and waste in the Haitian economy. We must teach biblical principles of a strong work ethic and a commitment to excellence.

Second, through the ministry of presence, the saints can have an eternal impact on people's lives in the workplace. Diehl argues that the manifestation of God's presence in

³ William E. Diehl, *The Monday Connection: A Spirituality of Competence, Affirmation and Support in the Workplace* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991).

⁴ Diehl, *Monday Connection*, 30.

the workplace depends upon the way believers interact with coworkers. Again, this is an important point. It is like Dr. David Gill's emphasis on character that "models" a godly presence—joy, prayer, concern for others, generosity—bringing God's presence to work. Brother Lawrence's classic book calls us to "practice the presence of God"⁵ wherever we may work. This is the counterpart to the voodoo spirits: the Holy Spirit made present in God's people.

Third, through the ministry of ethics, the believer can let his Biblical background dictate his conscience to make ethically sound decisions in the workplace. In Chapter One we described the problem of corruption; here is the answer we can bring: the values and ethics of Jesus. But first our people need to learn these biblical values and standards!

Fourth, through the ministry of change, the saints can bring change to the social status quo to serve the purpose of justice by becoming the voice and defense of the voiceless and defenseless in the world of work. Again, Diehl has a great point. Haiti needs radical change. But there is a huge difference between Jesus's way of bringing change and the ways of brutal dictators like Papa Doc and Baby Doc—or the paternalistic approaches of some foreign aid initiatives, no matter how well intended.

Fifth, the ministry of values, which consists of examining one's lifestyle, role, and responsibility, can bring about meaningful and constructive change in one's life as well as in the lives of coworkers in the workplace. Diehl explains the importance of intercessory prayer by Christians in favor of their coworkers. Again, recall Gill's point about prayer. Diehl's point here reinforces what was discussed earlier in his category of

⁵ Brother Lawrence, *Practicing the Presence of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 1999).

“presence.” In short, Diehl’s book is a great set of insights on what Christians must be equipped to bring to the workplace.

4: In *Taking Your Soul to Work: Overcoming the Nine Deadly Sins of the Workplace*, Stevens and Ung present a Christian approach to combating corruption in the workplace.⁶ Stevens and Ung dub the challenges of workplace corruption “the nine deadly sins of the workplace.” Besides deceitful behavior like theft and deceit, the authors observe nine “soul-sapping” struggles in the workplace: pride, greed, lust, gluttony, anger, sloth, envy, restlessness, and boredom. Some of those sins, the authors say, could generate offspring; for instance, envy could lead to hatred, whisperings, joy at neighbors’ misfortunes, and affliction at their prosperity. Work-related sins could be devastating spiritually not only for the workplace, they say, but also for the workers themselves.

In order to overcome “deadly sins of work,” Stevens and Ung provide nine resources for workplace spirituality, which are the spiritual gifts described in Galatians 5:22-23. Namely: 1) joy in boasting in the cross of Christ, not in self; 2) goodness by cultivating the attitude of giving rather than receiving; 3) love by caring for others; 4) self-control by being spirit-governed; 5) gentleness through submission to godly leaders; 6) faithfulness through persistence; 7) kindness by sharing the joy of others’ successes; 8) patience through hope, and 8) peace through aspiring to completeness and harmony. As saints cultivate these gifts in the workplace, according to the authors, they can change the nature of their soul and revolutionize their workplaces.

⁶ R. Paul Stevens and Alvin Ung, *Taking Your Soul to Work: Overcoming the Nine Deadly Sins of the Workplace* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2010).

Stevens and Ung consider the ‘outcomes of a spirit-led life’ resulting from workplace spirituality. The Spirit of God, they believe, could transform the sinful heart and mind of workers by changing pride to meekness, greed to gratitude, lust to purity, gluttony to moderation in eating, anger to self-control, sloth to normal productivity, envy to love, restlessness to rest, and boredom to thoughtful motivation.

Stevens and Ung’s work must be carefully studied by our pastors. It is full of deeply biblical and practical insights. Their focus is highly personal and needs to be supplemented by strategies for changing companies and cultures.

5: Your Work Matters to God by Doug Sherman and Bill Hendricks presents a comprehensive view of work in relation to God.⁷ This book is among the very first substantial descriptions of a biblical theology of work and its discipleship implications. They outline the Christian view of work, the way God views work, and argue that our work must be done in God’s way.

In the first part of their book, the authors present ambiguities and complications caused by the absence of a biblical view of work in the worlds of work and religion. The writers also point out the friction between the realms of faith and work, and between Christianity and the world. Sherman and Hendricks believe this gap is caused by the absence of teaching about workplace ministry in the church.

The church, Sherman and Hendricks argue, has become morally deficient because of the widespread compromise of Christian values and work ethics. Because the church does not take a stance on the matter, the world instead dictates its own morality to workplaces. Therefore, biblical values and ethical principles have disappeared from the

⁷ Doug Sherman and William Hendricks, *Your Work Matters to God* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1987).

work world today. Psychologists, sociologists, and historians argue that today's religion has become privately engaged, but socially irrelevant. Christians have little impact on the world of work today.

Because our work matters to God, however, the church must find a way to eliminate this gap between the world of religion and the world of work. The authors caution against separating work from God. Work can become an end unto itself. In other words, God is a Worker and created us in his image. We are his coworkers and employees of Christ. Because Christ is Lord of all of life, he presides over what we do on Sunday in church, during weekdays at home, and most importantly, in the workplace. Some people may regard work as a way to earn a living and pay the bills without ascribing any intrinsic value to work. So, working without satisfaction and a sense of purpose and fulfillment, some workers hold a secular view of work with the absence of God in the economy of work. Holding a secular view of work, some may see success in work as self-fulfillment by one's material wealth or professional recognition or social position, and even by making an idol of one's career.

To illustrate the impact of sin on work, Sherman and Hendricks discuss the curse placed on the earth after original sin, which resulted in harsh, toilsome working conditions. The power of the cross, they counter, can make a difference in the lives of workers. The gospel message of Jesus Christ, the authors say, can transform workers and change their perspectives about work itself by framing it in its relation with God. "The change that Christ makes in you as a worker is not without consequence for our work.

The effects of sin remain in effect, as we have seen. As a Christian, you have more reason than anyone to view your work as significant.”⁸

Believing and understanding that God values work, according to the authors, is key. Work, they argue, must be done in God’s way and with His results in perspective. Corruption and evil in the workplace must be faced without compromise to the moral values and the biblical precepts of God. Workers should avoid unbridled ambition and temptations in the workplace.

Finally, the authors urge the church to train and equip workers, to make them effective for God in the marketplace. Christian workers, they argue, should be seen as leaders who can influence the workplace and impact many coworkers’ lives for Christ. This is just what this thesis-project intends to do. What Sherman and Hendricks did for a general American audience almost thirty years ago, needs to be done for Haitians today.

6: In his book, *Work Matters*⁹ pastor Tom Nelson aims to help Christian workers connect Sunday to Monday. Nelson says that Christian vocation “is centered in a sovereign God who calls the saints to embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ and to follow him in the power of the Holy Spirit as their disciples.” Men and women were created “with work in mind” and bear God’s image in character and work. They contribute to “God’s good world” by caring and managing the earth and its resources, creating wealth for the common good and by protecting the environment.¹⁰

⁸ Sherman and Hendricks, *Your Work Matters*, 112.

⁹ Tom Nelson, *Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Press, 2011).

¹⁰ Nelson, *Work*, 16, 20, 21.

Nelson argues that our work must be an integral part of our Christian calling and a real act of worship. In our Christian vocation, God cares for all good work: ecclesiastical, missionary, or para-church work, as well as the work of the engineer, the plumber, the architect, the teacher, and the pharmacist, to name a few. Nelson quotes Paul's letter to the Colossians: "whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ" (Col 3:23-24 ESV). He issues the challenge to rethink work and the way work has been performed.

Second, the author describes the negative consequences that original sin brought on work after the fall. Once paradise was lost, sin terribly affected human hearts and work. Work, Nelson argues, is not a curse resulting from the fall; work precedes the Fall. After the fall work became painful, he says, as we live in a broken world with fallen people.

Nelson argues that sin corrupted work and the good world created by God. Since the fall, the whole creation is longing to be redeemed from sin and corruption. Only the redemptive plan of God through the cross of Christ, Nelson says, provides for the salvation of the fallen man and the restoration of good work.

According to Nelson, work concerns God, carries intrinsic value and must be placed on God's altar as a holy sacrifice. "God is transforming us in our work and transforming the world through our work," Nelson says. "In addition, the redeemed ought to bring their faith to work on Monday morning so that the people can be transformed for God's glory."¹¹

¹¹ Nelson, *Work*, 53.

As an example of Christian work, Nelson presents Christ as a hard-working carpenter who lived an ordinary life, though in an extraordinary way. Moreover, he acknowledges that individuals shape their work as well as their work shapes them. Nelson adds that as saints commit to working, they will be able to walk in the Spirit in the workplace and have the confidence of God's supernatural empowerment to adopt Christlikeness and overcome obstacles and workplace trials like physical abuse and temptation, immorality and corruption.

"Work's bottom line is more than just an economic one, the purpose of work consists of fostering the common good, seeking the welfare of the community, doing good to all, common grace for the common good, common grace in the workplace, and promoting workplace justice."¹²

According to Nelson, when facing challenges in the workplace, saints must maintain personal integrity without compromise, as Daniel did in Babylon. Furthermore, Nelson advises that saints attend to their personal wellbeing to avoid overload and burnout. Nelson concludes his book by urging the church to close the Sunday-to-Monday gap by teaching a robust theology of vocation and work.

Tom Nelson's message is especially important because of its freshness and its origins in a specific local congregation. It is in our congregations that faithful workplace disciples must and will be equipped and mobilized.

¹² Nelson, *Work*, 124, 125.

7: “What does faith have to do with daily work?” is the guiding question for Ross West’s book *Go to Work and Take Your Faith Too!*¹³ Like Robert Banks, West identifies a separation between faith and work, which he dubs ‘the Great Divide.’

This division, West says, results in a tragedy consisting of multiple losses. (1) First, saints spend a third of their lives (at work) without any application of the values, meaning, and approach to relationships taught by their faith; (2) second, saints spend a third of their lives without integrating their worship experience with daily work; (3) third, the world of work loses, because people of faith fail to incarnate the Word and share their values in the workplace. According to West, bridging the Great Divide is the ultimate responsibility of the church and the people of faith.

West explores the concept of work as a blessing or a curse. Work, he argues, is a divine blessing, since it has been God’s assignment to human beings (Gen 1:28). Referring to original sin and a fallen world, West writes, “The curse on the ground is not that work itself becomes a curse. When God, incarnate in Jesus, became a carpenter or a worker, our understanding of work was finally freed from the tradition of the curse.”¹⁴ West presents work as worthy of God’s praise and blessing and a calling for persons of faith.

In response to the question, “can faith really be lived at work?” the author argues that faith can and should be lived at work. People of faith, he says, are God’s missionaries and should not retreat from the world of work, and should use their spiritual

¹³ Ross West, *Go to Work and Take Your Faith Too!* (Macon, GA: Peake Road Press, 1997), 1.

¹⁴ West, *Go to Work*, 20.

gifts to impact their work and coworkers. West discusses the importance of finding a personal purpose as saints seek to relate daily work to their faith.

Regarding ethical challenges in the workplace, West's recommendations for the saints include: overcoming ethical challenges in the workplace while maintaining Christian ethical commitments, being mindful of fellow employees' ethical standards, and adopting a practical way of approaching ethical decisions and actions. Saints, West says, can promote faith as they help coworkers set worthy goals and find meaning in their work, as they show care toward fellow workers, and as they seek to create beauty and order through work.

Sharing the good news of the gospel, according to West, requires that saints show extra care in their relationships and exhibit sensitivity, patience and teach religious messages in the workplace in non-threatening and appropriate ways. According to West, connecting church and work life contributes to life balance. Faith provides the opportunity to live an abundant life, focused on priorities.

Identifying the right ways to share gospel messages at work, West says, should be done in prayer in meditation, to be in touch with God for his revelation and encouragement. West also highlights the importance of cultivating physical and mental health, avoiding the obsessive pursuit of wealth in the endeavor to make a living, and participating regularly in communities of faith.

Finally, the author encourages the church to prepare their people to live their faith in the world of work by acknowledging the lack of attention currently given to workplace ministry. He proposes strategies church leaders can use to bridge this gap, such as: providing study opportunities on the relationship between church and work, offering

vocational support groups, providing worship experiences on relating faith and daily work, and teaching the basics of the faith.

West's book repeats some of the great theological themes and insights of other important books but his emphasis on what a gift this can be to the workplace itself is something our people need to understand. This isn't just about us, or even just about worshipping God. It's really about loving our neighbor and loving the world as God does.

8: Ben Witherington's *Work: A Kingdom Perspective on Labor*¹⁵ begins with the following Christian definition of work from a kingdom perspective, "any necessary and meaningful task that God calls and gifts a person to do and which can be undertaken for the glory of God and for the edification and aid of human beings, being inspired by the Holy Spirit and foreshadowing the realities of the new creation."¹⁶

Like West, Witherington believes work in itself is good, and became toilsome after the fall. For West, it is not work itself, but the toilsomeness of work and pains of labor (for man in manipulating the earth and for woman in giving birth to children) that were added to the equation as a result of the curse involved in the fall.

According to Witherington, though work is toilsome, it is a call from God and must be done in a way to glorify him and edify others. Work, he adds, must be seen from a kingdom perspective and done with meaning, purpose and direction.

As an example, the author describes the sacred nature of work that occurred during the creation. He also describes God as a worker and man as God's workmanship

¹⁵ Ben Witherington III, *Work: A Kingdom Perspective on Labor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2011).

¹⁶ Witherington, *Work*, xii.

in the creation. Men and women are new creatures in Christ in the new creation plan of God.

To Witherington, no distinction should exist between “regular” work and godly work, because all work should be considered sacred, with the end-purpose to glorify God and edify others for the common good. He argues that a vocation finds its meaning and purpose after a call from God. So mankind is called to work, and such a work is ordained, approved, and given by God who is the Creator of both work and the workers. As all work is God’s work, Witherington says, Christian workers must display ethical behavior and do their jobs with excellence, integrity, and honesty to please God.

Witherington dismisses any type of laziness—not to be confused with rest or a sabbatical retreat from work—because God ordained work for man. He cautions workers not to become workaholics. As Christians, he says, we should model faith and be fruitful servants of the Lord.

Work, Witherington says, should be approached as ministry and ministry as work because work itself should be seen as an offering to God and a response to grace and salvation. We must do our work, he says, in a way that witnesses to the truth, Christ.

To conclude, the author points out the fallen nature of culture—which cannot provide salvation. Christians, he says, have the role of reshaping and transforming, not in the blink of an eye, culture for the glory of God. Part of the work of God’s kingdom is to create a culture honoring him. Witherington’s simple little book reinforces many of the themes we have seen in other works thus far.

9: In *The Gospel-Centered Life at Work*, Robert Alexander focuses on the spiritual dynamics of work and life, and how God uses our work in a lifelong process of

making us more like Christ.¹⁷ He argues that God is overseeing a transformation on an individual and global level. God, he says, shapes us in the image of His son Jesus Christ while using us as agents of change to sanctify and transform the world. He adds that God is working to create us in a new way to live from toil to faith.

While changing us, Alexander says, “God is in the business of adjusting us to work, to create us in a new way to live from toil to faith. That will transform our daily work to become a vocation. . . . a vocation will become a calling from Jesus to love, to serve, and follow him. Because work is part of God’s agency of change, Alexander says, faith and work should remain connected.”¹⁸

Echoing West and Witherington, Alexander discusses how work can be made new in and through Christ. As individuals gain a gospel-centered understanding of work, Alexander says they will repent from evils in the workplace to be conformed to the likeness of Jesus. According to Alexander, as image bearers of God, saints must work in a manner that reflects God’s character. In addition, by being God’s imitators in the world of work, he says, saints bring the blessings of God’s kingdom into the world of work.

Alexander urges the saints to make God’s commandments become their agenda in their daily work. Namely, that they go to work as God’s ambassadors and messengers to share the good news with those who do not know Christ.

10: Kent Humphrey’s *Lasting Investments: A Pastor’s Guide for Equipping Workplace Leaders to Leave a Spiritual Legacy* aims to prepare church leaders to

¹⁷ Robert W. Alexander, *The Gospel-Centered Life at Work* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2014).

¹⁸ Alexander, *Gospel-Centered*, 2, 5.

establish encouraging relationships while investing in leaders for workplace ministry.¹⁹

Humphrey offers a practical model to organize church leaders and prepare them for ministry. First, establish and deepen relationships as the foundation for true spiritual fellowship. As pastors spend time with leaders, and promote openness as mutual concerns are shared, they can promote better relationships.

Second, pastors should choose a few workplace leaders to equip them for workplace ministry. Humphrey encourages pastors in charge to: 1) seek advice from advisors in selecting leaders; 2) pray for leaders; 3) invite selected leaders; 4) set a date for the first meeting; 5) determine the goals of the group.

Third, as an equipper, the pastor will meet with leaders to discuss spiritual gifts, personality style, and leadership skills; brainstorm ways they can serve their team; discuss with leaders which areas they need support in; and allow them to strategize with each other how they can impact the workplace for Christ. Fourth, pastors and their groups should identify steps to be taken in order to overcome obstacles to workplace ministry. Fifth, as mentors of the workplace leaders, pastors should anticipate topics to address that might contribute to the group's spiritual growth.

Sixth, pastors should come up with creative approaches to ministry in the workplace by teaching the leaders how to integrate their work world and their spiritual lives; have them share previous experiences of sharing Christ in the workplace; have them learn and practice different ways of sharing about Christ. Seventh, the pastor should model for leaders the delivery of a faith-based message in a secular culture.

¹⁹ Kent Humphrey, *Lasting Investments: A Pastor's Guide for Equipping Workplace Leaders to Leave a Spiritual Legacy* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2004).

Eighth, the pastor should prepare the leaders to reproduce leaders; then they should be released into the workplace to influence the lives of other people into His kingdom. Finally, Humphrey recommends that pastors exhort church leaders to avoid comparisons among themselves, to become like Christ, to keep their sights on the eternal, and to keep making eternal investments in the workplace to leave a legacy in their communities. Humphrey's book offers us great help by detailing several specific steps pastors can take to equip their workplace disciples.

Summary

The foregoing literature has provided multiple insights for the training program we envision—from practical applications to shape the workshop itself, to helpful ways to express values and approach corruption in work environments.

Many elements from Nash and McLennan's work have informed and helped shape our curriculum for workplace ministry; in particular, portions relating to having open lines of communication between churches and the workplace, and overcoming barriers and stereotypes.

Banks's tools to build a curriculum and hands-on resources for small group discussions can be incorporated into our curriculum.

Diehl's recommendation for intercessory prayer resonates with the recommendation to pray in "Four Ways to Salt the Workplace" presented by Dr. Gill.²⁰ I believe that prayer as a part of ministry and discipleship presents a great opportunity in

²⁰ See Chapter One of this thesis-project for a description of Gill's recommendations.

ministering to coworkers. A “spirituality of competence, affirmation and support” can be applied to our curriculum for Haitian leaders.

Stevens and Ung’s treatise on the nine deadly sins of work is of particular value in its application in regenerating and renewing corrupted Haitian work environments.

West’s recommendations for church leaders promoting workplace ministry, as well as those for faith agents provide ideas for curriculum content.

Witherington’s treatise on Christianity as an agent to reshape and transform culture is particularly relevant in our pursuit of a cultural shift in Haitian workplaces through a program of workplace ministry.

Finally, Humphrey’s model for a pastor-led workshop offers numerous points to be replicated in our workshop on Equipping Haitian Leaders for Workplace Ministry and Discipleship.

* * * *

Clearly there are other resources for this task. It was my privilege to be part of a cohort of some thirteen students at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary for a three year program in Workplace Theology, Ethics, and Leadership, co-led by professors David W. Gill and Albert Erisman (2011-2013). We spent three intensive weeks studying workplace theology, ethics, and leadership—and individual intensive weeks on location studying “Finance & Marketing in Christian Perspective” (New York City), “Technology & Entrepreneurship in Christian Perspective” (Seattle), and “Globalization & Development in Christian Perspective” (Tegucigalpa, Honduras).

During these courses we read and discussed roughly thirty key books on these topics, half from the broader business literature, and half from Christian experts on these

topics. We did serious biblical research on all the topics and were privileged to visit businesses, churches, and ministries of all types. We heard guest lectures and presentations on the major topics listed in the course titles but also on evangelism, corruption, and other specific challenges. In particular, the visit to Honduras, which shares many of the same problems, challenges, and hopes as Haiti, was an inspiring contribution to my thinking.

Dr. Erisman's recently published study of the workplace lessons of the biblical Joseph, *The Accidental Executive*, and Dr. Gill's long experience as a seminary teacher and pastor (commissioning workplace disciples, visiting them at work, teaching and preaching the work lessons of the biblical text, etc.) gave me much food for thought in developing a church-based workplace ministry for Haitians. Visiting and hearing from founding director Katherine Leary Alsdorf about the Center for Faith and Work at Tim Keller's Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City was helpful—as were the comments and experiences of my fellow-pastors in the cohort.

CHAPTER THREE

A Biblical Theology of Work for the Haitian Saints

The foundation and heart of a church-based workplace discipleship program must be the Word of God, the Bible. In this chapter we will examine the basic outlines and themes of the biblical teaching on work that our workplace disciples must know if they are to represent our Lord faithfully and truly be “salt” in a needy marketplace.

As described in Chapter One, the Haitian saints are facing many challenges in the workplace, both in Haiti and in the USA. With such a large percentage of the Haitian people professing to be followers of Jesus Christ, if Haitian church leaders and theological institutions were to provide sound theological education on work, there would not be so much evil and corruption in the Haitian workplace and economy. The responsibility to offer an education on workplace ministry is one that the Haitian church leaders must consider and embrace.

Haitian American leaders should not only see work as God’s divine assignment to man, but they should also consider the Biblical and theological approach to work when preparing their saints for workplace ministry. Unfortunately, there is a complete absence of workplace theology, programs, or resources in Haitian churches or Christian institutions in the U. S as well as in Haiti.

Embracing a theology of work as an offering to God would be beneficial to the Haitian saints, as it would revolutionize their understanding of work and performance. As a result, instead of evil and corruption in the Haitian economy, there could be a sound

application of a theology of work. The impact of adopting this theology is illustrated in the following theoretical examples.

- Haitian health care providers would deliver health care that is life changing to their patients, which God would accept as a holy sacrifice to him.
- Haitian engineers would design systems and Haitian builders would erect structures that would improve people's lives, which God would consider as service rendered to him.
- Haitian financial professionals would protect and render profitable people's investments and retirement funds, which God would favor as an acceptable offering to him.
- Haitian Education workers would teach students with professionalism and excellence, which God would honor as divine fruits of labor in His sight.
- Haitian Christian leaders would minister to church workers and strive to equip the Haitian saints for workplace ministry by using appropriate resources.

Biblical accounts describe how the notion of work has been emphasized as an essential part of life since the genesis of humanity. The obligation for man to work represents the very duty of serving God, the Great Worker, and remains today. Scriptural examples of work abound.

In his book, *How the Church Fails Business People*, John C. Knapp exposed the failure of the Christian church to effectively address the gap between the saints' faith and their workplace. According to the author, a great number of Christian believers are struggling to relate their faith to the tasks they perform in the workplace. Knapp says that

the church fails to teach the saints how to live out their beliefs, and how to find meaning in their work.¹

Knapp's call for churches to address the gap between work and faith applies especially to Haitian church leaders, who ought to provide meaningful answers to several questions related to faith and work.

In his book on work, Ben Witherington defines biblical work as “any necessary and meaningful task that God calls and gifts a person to do and which can be undertaken to the glory of God and for the edification and aid of human beings, being inspired by the Holy Spirit and foreshadowing the realities of the new creation.”²

From the creation account in the book of Genesis, God introduced himself to humanity as the Creator of work and the Great worker who brings the heavens and the earth into existence *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). As it is written in Genesis: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. . . . And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light” (Gen 1:1, 3). When there was no light, nor day, nor night, nor waters, nor matter, nor heavens, nor earth, God made them all.

Genesis 2 presents God as a farmer: “Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the East, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. The LORD God made all kinds of trees that grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen 2:8-9). Acknowledging God as a Great Worker, the Psalmist said,

¹ John C. Knapp, *How the Church Fails Business People: and What Can Be Done about It* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2012), xii, xiii.

² Ben Witherington III, *Work: A Kingdom Perspective on Labor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2011), xii.

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands” (Ps 19:1).

The Old Testament includes numerous examples of God working alongside and through his people. God worked with Moses by parting the Red Sea to save the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt (Ex 14). God walked with the Israelites through the desert until He took them to the promise land (Josh). God was even at work in the construction of Solomon’s temple. It was God who provided the detailed blueprint for the temple. In addition to that, He gave wisdom to Solomon and enabled every craftsman with necessary skills to complete the work of that temple (2 Chr 1-2).

Furthermore, through Christ, God the Father worked to execute the plan of redemption at the cross to save whoever truly believes in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (Jn 3:16). “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me, and to finish his work” (Jn 4:34). Think also of Jesus growing up for many years as “the carpenter’s son,” and of his tireless work of feeding, healing, liberating, and teaching.

So the Scriptures present a God who himself is a worker, a creator and organizer and builder. He makes human beings in his image and likeness, including this capacity to work. He commands humanity to work. He works in the world in his Son Jesus Christ. And he works through people. All good work that happens in the world is ultimately because God is at work.

God is still at work today in scientific and technological discoveries that glorify his name and edify people by meeting their needs. God has been fully in action through discoveries such as cars and airplanes that shorten distances; nuclear energy used to produce electricity; vaccines that treat polio and many other fatal diseases; television and

telephones, which facilitate communication and create a single world community; and computers, to name a few. All of these good works are pleasing to God, and contribute to the betterment of the environment, and to the common good of humankind.

Good Work and Labor: God's Divine Task to the Haitian Worker

Since God is still working today, how can good work be restored in the Haitian economy? How can theological teaching convince Haitian workers that they ought to cooperate with God by doing good work in the workplace?

Gideon Goosen defines work as "any activity in which man cooperates with God in the unfolding of the potentialities of creation."³ In God's earliest covenantal relationship with human beings before and after the fall, he invited them to work. God blessed Adam and Eve, assigned them a divine task, and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground" (Gen 1:28). At the center of God's creation, human beings have been given the authority to subdue creation and exercise dominion over the living creatures.

Man has become God's coworker in the development and transformation of the physical world. In fact, God has assigned different tasks to man in order to transform and protect planet earth and everything in it. God, as creator of the Universe, is extending the work of His creation through man even today. As the Psalmist declared, "What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You

³ Gideon Goosen, *The Theology of Work*, Theology Today 22 (Hales Corners, WI: Clergy Book Service, 1974), 55.

have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all *things* under his feet” (Ps 8:4-6 NKJV).

Haitian saints and workers must be taught God’s theology of work. Workers must know that God, being just and holy, made everything good, according to the account of creation in Genesis. Based upon his divine nature, God can only produce good work. After completing the work of the heavens and the earth, God created man and woman in His own likeness and image (Gen 1:26). As bearers of God’s image, Haitian saints and workers have a duty to fully represent God in the workplace, and reflect his holiness, righteousness, and justice in the way they perform their tasks. Non-believers would then see God through the work of the saints.

Adam had to fulfill the duty of work from the beginning in the Garden of Eden, where God commanded him to take care of and cultivate the garden entrusted him (Gen 2:15; 3:23). Noah was committed to farming work (Gen 9:20). Abraham worked hard as a rancher (Gen 12:16); Isaac also cultivated the land (Gen 26:12) and Jacob worked with sheep and goats (Gen 30:29; 31:38-40).

Work is also intimately related to the story of redemption and liberation. Edwin Kaiser writes:

The social community of Israel had its inception in the liberation of the people from Egyptian slavery. Liberation from slavery was the basis for the whole social order, while bound up with this relation to Yahweh was the promise of the Land, his Land (Lev 25:23). The use of the land, work and rest in a new freedom, the whole social order followed the norms laid by Yahweh himself. It is reasonable to hold that the Covenant between God and His People, centering in the Sabbath law, contained a true divine work-command of a religious-moral character, demanding work activity required for a well-ordered life. Constant reference to the emancipation of the Hebrews from the slavery of Egypt clearly shows that the Sabbath is the sacred sign of freedom. Henceforth work is directed to God the

Liberator: work and rest in the new social order of freedom are divine services before God. Work without reference to Him is servitude to idols.⁴

If work is a key part of the covenant between God and his people, it follows that Haitian Christian leaders have a moral and spiritual obligation to create jobs and to promote work. Promoting work as a divine service could restore the dignity of the poor for the common good of humanity and for the glory of God, the Creator of work and the Great worker. This in turn, would create a well-ordered life and long-term stability in the Haitian community, both in Haiti and in the U.S.

If work is central to covenants and duties required by God of man, it follows that any corruption in the workplace is dishonesty to God, and offers no divine service to God. Corruption represents an abomination before the Holy God who tolerates no iniquity anywhere; because of his state of Holiness there is no place for iniquity in him, nor in his work. “He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he” (Deut 32:4).

Workplace Evil and Corruption

Haitian Christians need not only the constructive, positive revelation of Scripture about the meaning of work, they also need the illuminating biblical teaching on what went wrong in the creation, and the reason why. Since the fall and disobedience of man in the Garden of Eden, the nature and mind of man—including the way he performs work—have been completely affected by original sin. Sin has affected not only the relationship between the first human worker and his Creator, but also the rapport between human workers and the ways we relate to the natural environment. It begins with a terrible

⁴ Edwin G. Kaiser, *Theology of Work* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1966), 47, 61.

choice to try to be our own god, our own Lord and master, to do things “my way” instead of God’s way. It is disobedience and disregard for God. This is the essence of sin.

This sin has affected the interaction between human beings and their work. Thereafter, hatred, dishonesty, bitterness, theft, jealousy, greed, competition, covetousness, corruption, abuse, violence, and exploitation have entirely infringed upon the work industry. The Biblical account of the Garden of Eden describes the change that came to the world as a result of original sin. Severe were the repercussions and consequences of sin on work and the worker.

In their book, *Your Work Matters to God*, Sherman and Hendricks express themselves in this way, “Work has come with difficulties and challenges as a result of original sin. The curse makes the work environment “rough, uncooperative, and painful.”⁵

“Exempt from that curse, work, together with the moral principles and ethical values assigned to it, can still be an expression of obedience to God. Unfortunately, sin spoils the worker in the most profound way including his mind, thoughts, attitude, behavior, and actions.”⁶

The effect of original sin manifests itself in the evil and corruption found in Haitian workplaces. God despises evil-producing work of any form anywhere, including the workplace. God’s Word rejects the practices of exploiting the poor, doing injustice, abusing the laborer, stealing, greediness, and corruption in the workplace (Jer 22, 23).

⁵ Doug Sherman and William Hendricks, *Your Work Matters to God* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1987), 99.

⁶ Sherman and Hendricks, *Your Work Matters*, 98.

The story of Cain and Abel describes work as a sacrifice that workers render to God. But we all know the story how this workplace conflict led to murder.

In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it (Gen 4:3-7).

The account in Genesis describes the different labors performed by Cain and Abel.

While Abel was a shepherd, his brother Cain was a farmer. According to the text in Genesis, God blessed Abel by showing favor to the sacrifice made out of the fruit of his labor, while God rejected Cain’s sacrifice. Note well, though, that the problem was not that Cain was a farmer—after all, God had commissioned mankind to farm! The problem was not that he brought his produce as an offering to the Lord—after all, all of our work should be offered to God. The problem was Cain’s jealousy and rage over the delight the Lord took in Abel’s offering. This is a big lesson in not allowing jealousy toward our fellow workers to ruin our workplaces and careers.

Haitian workplaces are full of Cain’s jealousy and sometimes even violence and physical abuse. But they are also prone to idolatry. Worship of the zodiac and consulting and serving the spirits of the dead called “loas” are all parts of the Haitian voodoo and witchcraft, and could be considered idolatry. Isaiah contains a warning against idolatry, which reads as follows,

All who make idols are nothing, and the things they treasure are worthless.
Those who would speak up for them are blind;
they are ignorant, to their own shame.
Who shapes a god and casts an idol, which can profit nothing?
People who do that will be put to shame; such craftsmen are only human beings.

Let them all come together and take their stand;
they will be brought down to terror and shame (Isa 44:9-11).

Haitian church leaders should teach a well-balanced theology of work to the Haitian saints. This would enable the saints to perform good work before God as a holy sacrifice and service dedicated to him, the Great Worker and the Creator of work. Haitian workers must know that God rebukes any aspect of the Haitian culture promoting voodoo, idolatry, witchcraft, and magic. Deuteronomy condemns such idolatry and sorcery:

Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD; because of these same detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the LORD your God (Deut 32:10-13).

Redeeming the Workplace

Original sin has surely affected the environment of work, the character of the work experience, and our motives to perform work, but work itself has never been just the consequence of original sin. In his book *Go to Work and Take your Faith Too!* Ross West rejects any confusion about the nature of work after the fall of man and insists that, “work existed in Eden even prior to the temptation, the yielding, the discovery, and the punishment. So, the result of the curse on the ground is not that work itself becomes a curse.”⁷ West quotes Old Testament scholar Gerhard von Rad, “the result is that now work makes life so wretched, that it is so threatened by failures and wastes of time and often enough comes to nothing, that its actual result usually has no relation to the effort expended.” West also adds the following C. U. Wolf quote: “sin did not make labor

⁷ Ross West, *Go to Work and Take Your Faith Too!* (Macon, GA: Peake Road Press, 1997), 20.

necessary, but it made it less rewarding and subject to frustrations and problems. The prospects for finding meaning and satisfaction in daily work seem rather dismal then....”⁸

Despite the evil and corruption found in many Haitian workplaces, it is possible to transform a corrupt work environment into a divine assignment as originally given by God. Corrupt work can become good again and regain its divine nature when it is done for God’s glory. In the words of the Apostle Paul, “whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (1 Cor 10:31).

God demands that employers treat their workers justly and compassionately. Through the voice of the prophet Jeremiah, God warns greedy Haitian business owners to stop abusing and exploiting their workers, “Woe to him who builds his palace by unrighteousness, his upper rooms by injustice, making his own people work for nothing, not paying them for their labor” (Jer 22:13). Edwin G. Kaiser echoes the prophet Jeremiah’s call for dignity in the workplace:

For if divine work is the primordial pattern of the human, and if the divine effect of creation flowing from the hand of God the Creator is directed to man in its entire structure, it follows that human work is also the image of the divine in creating the conditions necessary for human existence. Man's work is also a reflection of the divine and receives from its primordial pattern its dignity and value, insofar as its goal is the terrestrial needs of man.”⁹

If sin has brought upon corruption, injustice, exploitation, evil and abuse into the Haitian workplace and economy, what role can the power of the cross of Christ play in bringing about change?

⁸ West, *Go to Work*, 20.

⁹ Kaiser, *Theology*, 59.

Led and empowered by the Holy Spirit, Jesus went to teach in a synagogue in Nazareth and read scripture to fulfill what was prophesied by Isaiah. We read in the book of Luke:

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: 'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.' Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, 'Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing' (Lk 4:16-21).

Such a declaration must rejoice the hearts and revive the hope of oppressed and exploited Haitian workers. In a sense, the true liberation of those marginalized workers depends alone upon the transforming power of the cross of Christ and His gospel, "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (Jn 8:36).

In *Your Work Matters to God* authors Doug Sherman and Bill Hendricks write that freedom "can be achieved only through the atonement of Christ that can transform both, the oppressor first and the oppressed."¹⁰ The authors explain that in order for that to happen, Christ must put the worker in the right relationship with God.

Both Haitian workers and their work environment are under the effect of the curse resulting from original sin. Christ, who overcomes sin and death, can deliver Haitian workers from the bondage of workplace corruption and evil. First, the Haitian worker needs to be restored in the pre-Fall relationship with God through Christ, the Mediator. That reconciliation is possible through the blood of Jesus Christ alone.

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much

¹⁰ Sherman and Hendricks, *Your Work Matters*, 112.

more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation (Rom 5:8-11).

Sherman and Hendricks explain that Christ can not only put the worker in the right relationship with God, but he can also put the worker's opus (work) back in the right relation with God. That can happen when the worker understands that God values good or noble work, and that Christ is the boss. In a sense, the worker shall serve Christ, his or her Master. Knowing that we are Christ's servants, and that he is using us and our work to accomplish his purpose, will make a profound difference in our attitudes, values, and behavior on the job.¹¹

As Haitian workers gain an understanding of God's view of work, they can give more meaning to their daily work, reflect the Master on the job, and use work to glorify God. As a result, the work of the Haitian worker will be in the right relation with the Creator. As this happens, Haitian workers will be following the adage of the Apostle Paul, who said, "Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col 3:17).

Regarding work, Miroslav Volf argues that "the noble products of human ingenuity have an ultimate significance to God, that human work matters to God, and that the results of the cumulative work of human beings have intrinsic value. First and foremost, human work carries an eternal value related to the eschatological new creation."¹²

¹¹ Sherman and Hendricks, *Your Work Matters*, 113-114.

The apostle Paul spoke of an eschatological transformation of the world to liberate creation and the world from the bondage of sin, corruption, and evil. In the book of Romans, he said,

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies (Rom 8:18-23).

Haitian leaders need to sharpen and deepen their theology of work to prepare the saints to embrace the concept of new creation and what Volf calls, “the theological understanding of cooperation with God in their daily work and in the transformation of evil work to good work in the workplace.”¹³

* * * *

A theology and philosophy of work that flows directly out of Scripture, under the Lordship of Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit: this is the only possible and sufficient counterforce to the voodoo-infested, historically impoverished and corrupted Haitian workplace and marketplace. We have explored briefly the way the great biblical themes of Creation, Fall, and Redemption can cast light on our work but now the question is how to communicate this best to our Haitian brothers and sisters.

¹² Miroslav Volf, *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 94-95.

¹³ Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 100.

CHAPTER FOUR

A Workplace Discipleship Curriculum for Haitian and Haitian-American Churches

In this chapter we will outline a curriculum for equipping Haitian Christians for workplace ministry and discipleship. This curriculum is designed for use in churches both in the U.S. and Haiti. The curriculum consists of five lessons:

- **Lesson 1: Workplace Discipleship Vocabulary**
- **Lesson 2: Work As God Intended It and As It Is**
- **Lesson 3: Overcoming Workplace Challenges in Egypt:**
 - **The Lessons of Joseph**
- **Lesson 4: Doing God's Work in Babylon:**
 - **Learning from Daniel**
- **Lesson 5: Doing the Right Thing in the Workplace:**
 - **God's Ten Commandments**

LESSON 1: Workplace Discipleship Vocabulary

Biblical Texts: Genesis 1 and 2; Colossians 3:17, 23; 1 Thessalonians 4:10-12

Key Question: What are the most basic, essential concepts and terms we need to use in describing a biblical Christian approach to work?

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Define the key terminology
- Illustrate and give examples for each key term

Small Group Activity: Students will work in small breakout groups to come up with definitions, illustrations, and applications of each of the ten key terms.

- Define and illustrate (give examples if you can) each of the ten key terms
- Share how these terms relate to faith and work as you think about it now.

Ten Key Words

- | | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| • Creation | • Image of God |
| • Work | • Sabbath |
| • Sin | • Idolatry |
| • Redemption | • Vocation, calling |
| • Ethics | • Discipleship |

Instructional Activity:

The instructor will lead a large group review of the ten key terms, drawing on student insights and experiences, and clarifying the biblical foundations and importance of each concept.

Instructor Notes on Vocabulary

Creation: The action whereby in sovereign freedom and out of nothing God brought about and constantly maintains in existence all that exists.¹ God is the Creator of all. It is in his nature to create what is good and beautiful. God sustains and upholds what he has created.

Image of God: All men and women, from Adam and Eve onward, have been created in the image and likeness of God. This means, among other things, that we too are intended to be “creative” of good, useful, and beautiful things in the service of God and others. This is a foundation for understanding what our work is about.

Work: Work is “any necessary and meaningful task that God calls and gifts a person to do and which can be undertaken to the glory of God and for the edification and aid of human beings, being inspired by the Holy Spirit and foreshadowing the realities of

¹ Gerald O’Collins and Edward G. Farrugia, *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*, Rev. ed. (New York: Paulist Press, 2000), 56.

the new creation.”² The Fourth Commandment says to “work six days” (not just to rest on the seventh day). We are to do all our work in the name of, and to the glory of, God.

Sabbath: The seventh day. God rested on the seventh day and we are commanded to do likewise. Jesus and Paul teach us not to be legalistic about the exact day or about the occasional need to provide healing, food, or help on the Sabbath but the basic teaching of Scripture is that we cannot have good work unless it is balanced with weekly rest and Sabbath for God.

Sin: Sin is falling short of, or deliberately violating, God’s holy standards. All of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. In Jesus Christ and because of the cross, God extends forgiveness and calls us to a renewed and reborn life, including in our workplaces. The temptation and fall described in Genesis 3 get at the heart of what is wrong in our own lives and in our workplaces.

Idolatry: Idolatry is worshipping anything less than the one true God of all; it is worshipping things that we have made, whether money or possessions or even our companies and careers. Idolatry is a terrible sin and is forbidden by God. We are to worship only the living and true God.

² Ben Witherington III, *Work: A Kingdom Perspective on Labor* (Colorado Springs, CO: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2011), xii.

Redemption: The term redemption is a basic financial term for “buying back,” or paying a ransom. God is not just the Creator and Sustainer, but the Redeemer who purchases lost and sinful human beings out of their debt and bondage to sin by his own blood and his sacrificial death at Calvary. Our Redeemer God sets free those in bondage, gives sight to the blind, heals the hurting, saves the lost, brings life to the dead, reconciles the alienated, and fixes what is broken. All men and women are made in the image and likeness of the Redeemer, and thus it is part of human work to bring redemption and healing and help to our hurting world, not just in a spiritual sense, but materially as God enables us.

Vocation: Vocation comes from the word “vocal,” “to call.” Our work is not just something we choose to do on our own or just for money or just because a job counselor suggests it. Our work as Christians we carry out as a calling from God. Our work is a vocation, not just a job.

Ethics: Ethics (or morality) is about matters of right and wrong, good and bad. It is about fairness, honesty, integrity, justice, kindness and more. For Christians it is God and his Word (such as the Ten Commandments) that decides on these standards. We seek to live up to and promote God’s ethical standards in our lives, our work, and our relationships.

Discipleship: Discipleship is about “learning from and following.” Christians are not just called to believe in Jesus but to learn from him and follow him, not just on

Sunday and in church activities, but every day of the week and in work and everywhere. There is no complete discipleship unless it includes workplace discipleship.

Conclusion: Lesson wrap-up and class prayer.

LESSON 2: Work As God Intended It and As It Is

Biblical Text: Genesis 1-3

Key Questions: What are the basic outlines and themes in a biblical understanding of our work? What makes work good in the eyes of God? What makes it bad?

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- understand the nature of work in God’s original Creation
- understand how work was distorted and corrupted by sin and the Fall

Small Group Activity:

Students will work in groups of two or three. Each small group will focus on a specific field of work: health, education, transportation, agriculture, military, finance, manufacturing, construction, banking, business, mechanics, ministry, factory, food, entertainment, travel and tourism, politics, science and technology, research, space, or engineering.

- First discuss how God can be served through creative, useful, or beautiful products or services in this field of work. What is the positive “Creation” (or Redemption”) potential in this field?
- Next discuss how in this specific field bad things can happen to the workers or to customers or others in the community. What can go wrong? Why does it go

wrong? How does our understanding of sin, fallenness, and rebellion against God explain some of these problems?

- How might God use Christians to bring redemption and healing to these problems described in this field of work?

Instructional Activity:

The instructor should offer a brief explanation of the Biblical theology of work to the class in the pre-Fall and post-Fall context. The following are key points.

Instructor Notes on Workplace Theology

Good Work: The Creator and the Creation

From the beginning of time, God designed work as a good thing to do. As the Greatest and First Worker, he made the heavens and the earth including everything in them (Gen 1:1-31; 3:21). For man and woman, made in the image and likeness of the Creator, work was without any evil, toil, and hardship because of the presence of God in the Garden of Eden—where humankind and God were in harmonious and peaceful relationship. Work was given as a mandate to man and woman, sometimes called the “cultural mandate.” After God made man and woman in his image, he gave them the task of having dominion over creation, of being fruitful (Gen 1:26-28), and of cultivating and keeping the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:15), and even of naming the animals (Gen 2:20).

Bad Work: Sin and the Fall

After eating the forbidden fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve stopped working and instead hid from God. Both of them were driven out of the Garden of Eden and into a situation where work and child-bearing were accompanied by pain and toil. Both the worker and the work environment fell under a curse and it became difficult for humankind to earn their daily bread and survive. They were still called to work and work still had its high potential to serve God and others, but now it was broken and imperfect.

Good Work: The Redeemer and New Creation

Right away in Genesis we can see God's redemptive work. He replaces Adam and Eve's garments of leaves with better quality, warmer, more durable leather garments. Eve may endure more pain in childbirth but she immediately says "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man." (Gen 4:1). Noah builds an ark to save whoever will enter from an impending flood. God uses Moses to liberate the Israelite slaves from Egypt. Good work is not just creative work, it is redemptive as well.

Think of how Joseph worked in the midst of Egypt, and Daniel in the midst of Babylon. Things are far from perfect but God is there, using his people to make it better. Jesus himself worked as a carpenter, then a teacher, a healer, and a provider of food to the hungry. Paul worked as a tent-maker, Lydia as a seller of purple. Work in all of our life circumstances is a calling from God and a service to God and to the people.

The atoning work of Christ brings redemption and new birth to the repentant worker (Rom 10:9-11; Col 3:23-24). The return of Christ someday will bring the restoration and renewal of not only the Heavens but Earth, not just the destruction of Babylon but the emergence of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:1-27; Rom 8:18-25) where our Lord of lords and King of kings will reign forever and ever.

The return of Christ will reconcile the worker with work, the worker with himself, and workers with co-workers. That return will also restore the full dignity of work, and the dignity of workers, back to their pre-Fall, sinless state. Finally, the coming of Christ will reconcile workers with God, the Creator of work and the Maker of the worker himself.

Large Group Discussion:

- How have you in your own work experiences seen the positive side of creation and redemption that God intends for us?
- How have you seen or experienced the impact of sin and the fall in your work?
- As you think about the workplace in Haiti and the kinds of jobs people do, what are examples of good, creative or redemptive, God-honoring work we could encourage?
- And what, in the Haitian context, are the examples of fallen, sinful, corrupt or oppressive work that we should try to overcome or replace?

Conclusion: Lesson wrap-up and class prayer.

LESSON 3: Overcoming Workplace Challenges in Egypt: The Lessons of Joseph

Biblical Text: Genesis 37-47

Key Question: What is the best way to resist corruption and evil, and instead to do good, in a challenging, non-Christian workplace?

Learning Objective:

At the end of lesson 3, students should be able to:

- Identify ways to resist and overcome temptations in the workplace by learning from the scriptural account of Joseph.

Pre-Class Assignment:

Students should name all possible temptations, corruptions, and evils encountered in the workplace today—and describe briefly their opinions on how best to struggle and overcome these problems.

Instructional Activity:

The instructor should summarize the Joseph story (based on Genesis 37-47)³:

Loved by some and hated by others, Joseph was the youngest and favorite son of a large family. His brothers became tremendously jealous of him because of their father's preferential treatment and Joseph's apparent arrogance as the favored son. They sold him

³ For a helpful and creative reading of the life of Joseph for its workplace discipleship lessons, see Erisman, *The Accidental Executive*.

into slavery where he wound up in Egypt working for Potiphar. Potiphar came to love and trust Joseph, and made him manager of his house, business and wealth. Potiphar's wife, however, attempted to seduce Joseph. Joseph resisted and refused to betray his master's trust. In his workplace, he truly exemplified faith and integrity.

Unfortunately, Potiphar's bitter wife accused Joseph of rape, which resulted in his going to prison for several years. Even in prison, on unjust charges, Joseph did his work brilliantly and faithfully. Eventually, God revealed himself to Joseph by enabling him to interpret the Pharaoh's dreams and then intervened to free innocent Joseph and lift him from humiliation to dignity. Joseph became the second-most important leader in Pharaoh's administration. By organizing the kingdom to produce and store enough food to sustain a seven-year famine, Joseph helped preserve Egypt from disaster. So great was Egypt's surplus that people from near and distant countries came to Egypt to obtain food.

When Joseph's brothers came to Egypt from Israel to seek food to save their family from starvation, Joseph recognized them. Without taking any revenge against his brothers for their past actions, he protected them and provided for them. Eventually he also explained to them God's purpose in his life: "But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God" (Gen 45:7-8). "'You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.' And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them" (Gen 50:20-21).

Small Group Activity:

Students will work in small groups in order to discuss the following six questions (each small group to be assigned to one of the questions). Discuss together and prepare to report to the large group:

1. Have you ever seen favoritism have bad results, as it did with Jacob's favoring his son Joseph in front of his brothers? Was Joseph unwise in telling his brother about his dreams of ruling over them . . . and wearing his special coat of many colors in front of them? What are the lessons here for Jacob the father? For Joseph the favorite son? For Reuben and Judah and the jealous big brothers? What are the lessons, not just for families, but for the workplace?
2. Why did first Potiphar, and later the prison boss, come to have such deep trust in Joseph and give him promotions to such responsibility? What are the lessons for our work experiences? Is there any time or place for complaining or protest when things don't go well? How was Joseph able to be so patient and persistent and high-performing in such difficult and unjust circumstances? What are the lessons for our approach to work?
3. Why was it important for Joseph to refuse the easy offer of sex in his workplace? Why should Christians today resist and overcome sexual temptation in the workplace? How best can we resist today? What can we learn from Joseph?
4. How was Joseph able to tell the truth even when it must have been uncomfortable (telling the chief baker he was going to die, telling Pharaoh a terrible famine was coming)? Have you ever had to tell an uncomfortable truth in the workplace? How can we Christians be people of courage and truth in the workplace?

5. What can we learn from Joseph's organization and management during the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine? What are the management and work lessons for us today? Have you experienced periods of plenty and periods of want during your life and work?
6. When Joseph was now the mighty Prince of Egypt and his brothers the poor and hungry travelers from Israel, how did he treat this reversal of power? How do you think most people would act in this circumstance? Have you ever seen a reversal of position like this? What are the lessons from this part of the Joseph story?

Conclusion: Lesson sharing, instructor wrap-up, and class prayer

Despite the unfortunate events that God allowed in Joseph's life, Joseph understood that God's purpose for his life could be fulfilled at his very workplace in Egypt. There, Joseph remained faithful to his vocation as finance minister, and remained committed to his religious values and his faith by resisting and overcoming the temptation to commit adultery with Potiphar's wife while on the job. Joseph showed his moral fiber by protecting and caring for his brothers, old offenders. He resisted the temptation to abuse his power to exert vengeance and instead showed mercy and love to his family.

Homework:

At the end of lesson 3, each student should write a letter to a Christian friend or colleague sharing a few lessons learned from the life story of Joseph.

LESSON 4: Doing God's Work in Babylon: Learning from Daniel

Biblical Text: Daniel chapters 1, 3, 6, and 9

Key Question: How can Christians stay faithful to God and be effective and excellent in their work even in Babylon, a pagan situation?

Lesson Objective:

At the end of Lesson 4, students should be able to:

- Drawing on lessons from Daniel, describe how to resist temptation and conformity to the bad side of Babylon, find ways of staying strong and faithful to the Lord, and contribute significantly to the people and culture around us.

Pre-class Assignment:

Read the first six chapters of Daniel and think about their lessons for the workplace today.⁴

Introduction:

Instructor should summarize the basic outlines of the Daniel story in Daniel 1-6.

Small group Activity: Break the class up into small groups, each assigned to discuss one of the first six chapters of Daniel and the workplace lessons:

⁴ Larry Peabody, *Job-Shadowing Daniel: Walking the Talk at Work* (Denver: Outskirts Press, 2010) is a great study that complements these lessons.

Chapter 1: Taken captive off to Babylon. Studying the world's wisdom. Staying true to God's ways. What was Daniel's first test of faith in his workplace training at king Nebuchadnezzar's palace? How did he respond and what was the outcome? What are the lessons for our workplace discipleship?

Chapter 2: Nebuchadnezzar's dream and the failure of his own dream interpreters. Daniel's response. The outcome. What are the workplace lessons for us today? What are the dreams of today's workers and business leaders? Can we help them understand their own dreams and what God might want to say to us today?

Chapter 3: Nebuchadnezzar builds a huge idol/statue and orders everyone to worship it. Daniel's three friends refuse and are thrown into the fiery furnace. How do they respond to this ultimate trial? What is the outcome? What are the big idols everyone wants us to worship today and would persecute us for if we refuse? What are the lessons here that can help us stay strong?

Chapter 4: Nebuchadnezzar's pride and its consequences. How did Daniel act when it was terrifying to have to tell the truth and warn the prideful king? Is our modern world ever full of arrogance and pride like Nebuchadnezzar? What are the lessons for our workplace attitudes and behavior?

Chapter 5: Belshazzar's feast and the writing on the wall. What was the problem with Belshazzar? What was the message on the wall that Daniel interpreted? What might be

God's message to the great rulers of our time? How can we deliver the Gospel message to a corrupt, pagan culture?

Chapter 6: Darius's law (pushed through by Daniel's enemies) against prayer. Daniel's response. The lions' den. What are the lessons here? Is there ever a time to refuse to obey a worldly law or regulation? How would we know when that is?

Large Group Discussion and Instructor Summary Comments

Each of the six groups should briefly share the story and the takeaway lessons for the workplace. Then the instructor can make some summary comments:

- Daniel must have been spiritually well equipped—both at his paternal home and his temple—in order to connect his faith and his work at the royal court. Has your family or church equipped you to integrate your faith and your work?
- Daniel 6:1-28 describes how the help of God never fails for those who, like Daniel, faithfully serve him, even in a challenging workplace. What do you think about Daniel and his companions' decisions to accept to be sent into the lion's den and the fiery furnace (Dan 3:16-18) rather than compromising their faith at their workplace? Do you think you could do it?
- Daniel's faithfulness to God was unshakeable in the workplace. He conquered institutional fear and rebuked the evil established by King Nebuchadnezzar.
- Daniel didn't allow his faith to become subservient to his work environment. He showed his faith by refusing to give in to the cultural abomination of Babylon, by

refusing to worship the statue or false gods, and by refusing to spoil himself with the idolatrous food of the king.

- Daniel didn't let the Chaldean culture dictate the way he carried out his work. He resisted by upholding God's principles in the midst of temptations.
- As a member of Nebuchadnezzar's royal court, Daniel played the role of a prophet for God in the workplace by communicating God's will to the king through the interpretation of the king's dreams.
- Daniel was able to resist and overcome challenges at the workplace through frequent fasting and constant prayers—at least three times a day, even on the job.
- Daniel was able to be the salt of his workplace and the light of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom by holding true to his faith in the midst of the darkness and evil that existed in that kingdom.
- Daniel's integrity at work impacted his coworkers and promoted peace and joy in Daniel's workplace.
- Daniel's spiritual conviction and steadfast faith in God considerably impacted not only the government of King Nebuchadnezzar, but also people in that whole kingdom.
- Daniel and his friends' stand for God caused them to become victims for their faith and exposed them to bitter suffering, and even death at times.
- God was Daniel's refuge and helper, and God's faithfulness never fails for those who are facing distress and tribulation for His cause.

Conclusion: Lesson wrap-up and class prayer

LESSON 5: Doing the Right Thing in the Workplace: God's Ten Commandments

Biblical Text: Exodus 20:1-17

Key Question: How can Haitian Christian workers and managers discern and do and promote ethical work and workplaces in the face of widespread corruption and injustice?

Learning Objective:

Upon completion of lesson 5, students will be able to:

- Give basic definitions and explanations of “ethics,” “right and wrong”
- Summarize the ethical teaching of the Ten Commandments⁵

Large Group Activity

The instructor should begin with

- Some definition of “ethics” (discerning and doing the *right* thing, not just the legal or popular or profitable thing) and explain what specific characteristics make ethics *Christian* (doing what is right *in God's eyes*, as known through Jesus Christ and Scripture by the Holy Spirit in the fellowship of the Church).
- Some explanation that even non-Christians, without the Bible, have a God-given conscience and God's “law written on their heart” (Rom 1-2) and they will

⁵ See David W. Gill, *Doing Right: Practicing Ethical Principles* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004) and David W. Gill, *It's About Excellence: Building Ethically Healthy Organizations* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011) for development of this approach to ethics.

sometimes have good ethical insights and motivations that we can affirm and share.

- Being ethical isn't just about good rules and logic but about character and community and purpose.
- Nevertheless, if there is one basic statement in the Bible about God's standards of right and wrong it is the Ten Commandments, the "covenant" between God and his chosen people.
- Our motivation is not to try to keep God's law to earn our salvation—it is to obey God's commands and teaching as an act of love and faithfulness to our Lord.
- Have all the students stand together and say aloud together:
 1. You shall have no other gods before me.
 2. You shall not make for yourself an idol
 3. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God
 4. Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy;
Six days shall you labor and do all your work.
 5. Honor your father and your mother
 6. You shall not murder.
 7. You shall not commit adultery.
 8. You shall not steal.
 9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor
 10. You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Small Group Activity

Divide the class into five or ten small groups (depending on the number in the class) and assign each group to one (or two) of the commandments. Their small group task is to explain the meaning of the commandment and its possible importance and applications to our ethics in the workplace.

Large Group Activity

The instructor should ask for reports on each of the commandments and after each report comment on the meaning and application:⁶

1. You shall have no other gods before me

This is the first and most important principle. What are we worshipping in our workplace? Is it money and profit? Voodoo spirits? Our own success and reputation? Power? We must worship the Creator and Redeemer and bow the knee only to him, or none of the rest of the ethics will have a chance.

2. You shall not make for yourself an idol

This is a close companion to the first commandment but it highlights the importance of not focusing our awe, and sacrifice, and adoration on the works of our hands. We must worship the Creator, not the creation or creature.

3. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God

A workplace full of disrespectful, profane taking of God's name in vain is not a workplace of prayer. And it is probably not a place of respectful speech to each other.

⁶ Some of this language is drawn from Prof. Gill's explanations of the Decalogue for workplace ethics and is used with his permission.

4. Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy; Six days shall you labor and do all your work

Good work is important; it is the command of God. But it must be accompanied by time off and rest. It is wrong to drive our workers seven days a week. Workers must be able to use allocated vacation time and sick days for self-care and family care. That is one of the powerful tools to make the organization successful.

5. Honor your father and your mother

Never undervalue the significance of families and friends of workers. It is ethical that the leaders or managers of an organization recognize and respect each worker's family including spouses, parents, relatives, children, and friends. The workplace can support and show interest in the worker's family members by inviting and welcoming them to social events at the workplace, and by being supportive to workers who need time off from the job to take care of a sick relative.

6. You shall not murder

Protect the life, safety, and health of workers and never harm or jeopardize the physical wellbeing of a worker or anyone. Managers must uphold the highest standards of safety to protect the lives of employees and customers. It is crucial to avoid compromising the safety and sanity of the work environment. Safety must regulate any service, production, or product—from the planning stages to execution and final inspection.

7. You shall not commit adultery

Keep commitments in a trustworthy, reliable manner. Never betray your relational commitments/covenants or undermine those made by others. The workplace must be safe for existing marital covenants and relationships. It is unethical for a manager to use a position of power or influence to tempt and drive a coworker into a romantic relationship with him or her. Managers must also respect business commitments, promises, contracts, agreements and relationships made with business partners, customers, and collaborators.

8. You shall not steal; Promote fairness in matters of money and property

Avoid unfair wages, prices, or financial practices. Governments have an obligation to enact and enforce laws that promote fairness in the distribution of wealth, health, jobs, tax rate laws, services, and justice to maintain peace and stability in the land. Organizations are ethically obligated to promote fairness in employees' wages, promotion, compensation, benefits, and treatment. Companies must be fair in their dealings with customers in billing for the products and services that are fully and professionally rendered.

9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor

Communicate truthfully and constructively: never mischaracterize people, products, services, and facts. Truth must be at the very base of any ethically sound organization that always does what it says and says what it does in the open about its workers, customers, business partners, products, data, people, finances, and services. This will build the trust and confidence needed to

establish a good reputation, business and leadership, and relationships in the company.

10. You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor

Cultivate a positive and generous attitude: Never give into negativity, anger, greed, and envy. Leaders and managers of any organization must avoid being greedy at the expense of the well-being of anyone.

Concluding Review of the Course; General Discussion and Prayer

- 1: What is workplace discipleship and why is it important?
- 2: How does our Bible present the basic meaning and purpose of work in God's eyes?
- 3: How does good work go bad and become corrupt, dangerous, and a big burden?
- 4: What are some memorable lessons from Joseph about how to glorify God in our work?
- 5: What are some memorable lessons from Daniel about how to glorify God in our work?
- 6: What is ethics about and what are the basic *characteristics* and *guidelines* of a Christian ethics?

CHAPTER FIVE

Taking Stock and Moving Forward

We have seen the great need for a workplace theology and discipleship in the Haitian context. We have reviewed the problems and the challenges. We have reviewed the resources that help us find our way forward. We have gone to the Bible to develop the foundation and insight that alone can provide an answer. And we have sketched out a curriculum in five steps or lessons that could help our pastors and people to begin the revolution we so desperately need.

How might we promote all of this in the Haitian churches and then out into the workplace? Can we try to get our pastors and then our church members to attend this five-part course? Should we give prizes for memorizing the Ten Commandments? For passing a brief test on the material in this course?

Here are some concrete steps that church leaders can take in order to better equip and support their workplace disciples, and establish a strong discipleship ministry in the church:

- I. Pastors pray and prepare for workplace ministry and discipleship.** The Pastor should spend time with God by praying for spiritual discernment regarding workplace ministry. The Pastor should seek all means to equip himself so that he can equip other church leaders for ministry.

II. Pastors meet with church leaders. The Senior Pastor should invite all church leaders to a meeting to share with them the Workplace Ministry and Discipleship plan including the vision statement, the mission statement, strategies to execute the vision, the Workplace Ministry and Discipleship curriculum, staff and human resource needs, didactic material needs, and the financial cost to run and maintain that workplace discipleship ministry in the church. In order to have fellow leaders embrace and take ownership of the vision, the Pastor should solicit their input with regard to strategies, curriculum, needs, and cost.

III. Pastors either use the curriculum in this thesis-project or else find or develop another one they prefer. *Faith Goes to Work*, by Robert J. Banks, is a good model for a Sunday School curriculum on workplace discipleship.¹ Banks covers the following topics:

Lesson 1: Christian's Responsibilities in the Workplace

Lesson 2: Connection between Faith and Work

Lesson 2: Bringing God's Kingdom to the Marketplace

Lesson 3: A Business Owner Mission

Lesson 4: Reflecting Christ in the Banking Industry

Lesson 5: A Craft Worker as Marketplace Apostle

Lesson 6: Bringing the Marketplace into the Worship

Lesson 7: The Faith-Work Journey

Lesson 8: Steps for Effective Evangelism in the Workplace

¹ Robert J. Banks, *Faith Goes to Work* (New York: Alban Institute, 1993).

IV. Strategies to Establish Workplace Ministry and Discipleship in a Church²

- a. Instruct the Prayer Ministry to prioritize such a vision in the prayer life of the church.
- b. Organize an important Workplace Ministry and Discipleship Awareness event on a Sunday to mobilize the whole church.
- c. Train a group of leaders for Workplace Ministry and Discipleship
- d. Train a team of three leaders to oversee and maintain such a ministry, which is so vital for the numerical, ministerial, and spiritual growth of a Church. The team will make sure that each ministry head at the church can pray and implement the vision at the level of his/her respective ministry.
- e. Incorporate in the Sunday Worship service a special prayer once a month for different categories of workers from different fields (health, education, construction, technology, engineering and science, business and finance, transportation, law and law enforcement, farming, social services, music and entertainment, sports, communications, etc.).
- f. Create and make available at a booth literature and information to reinforce the church teaching on Workplace Theology and Ethics, Ministry and Discipleship.

² Dr. David W. Gill has often promoted “Six Ways Pastors Can Better Connect to their Workplace Disciples”: (1) Study, preach, and teach the workplace insights of the biblical passage before them; (2) pray regularly in private and in worship for the workplace challenges and opportunities of their people; (3) visit regularly their church members in their various workplaces to learn about them first hand; (4) read workplace books and articles periodically to get a sense of what is happening in that world; (5) regularly *commission*, with a challenge and prayer in the worship service, some workplace group in the church (health care, food services, teaching, finance, etc.); and (6) sponsor or lead regular Christian education programs in the church.

- g. Invite Christian speakers and writers to preach once a month and conduct conferences at the church twice a year on Workplace Ministry and Discipleship, and Workplace Theology and Ethics.
- h. Organize a special outreach day about Workplace Theology at church and invite other church leaders in the community to benefit from different types of workshops and activities related to Workplace Theology, Evangelism, and Ethics.
- i. Organize an essay competition, asking church youth to write a piece reflecting the connection between a believer's faith and the workplace.
- j. Prepare a preaching series addressing Workplace Ministry and Discipleship, and Workplace Theology and Ethics starting from the Sunday prior to Labor Day, and for three consecutive months at the church.
- k. Set times throughout the year for the pastor to make workplace visits in order to encourage depressed and discouraged workers, and provide support for members who are suffering exploitation, sexual and physical abuse, and injustice in the workplace.
- l. Place a box at the church for workers to submit written requests for workplace pastoral visits, prayer, and counseling with regard to work-related stress and hardship.
- m. Create opportunities at the church for Pastors to provide counseling to those who have lost their jobs.
- n. Create an entrepreneurship class to assist those who are unemployed in starting their own businesses and helping them find sources of financing.

- o. Design a workshop at the church to help people find jobs (including resume writing, interviewing, follow up and staying current).
- p. Incorporate a line item in the church budget to cover expenses related to Workplace Visit Ministry.
- q. Mobilize the prayer ministry at the church to take workers' prayer requests before God for answers and welcome them all in the church prayer room.
- r. Use church financial and human resources to provide professional counseling, pastoral care, and even references to legal services for those who have suffered abuse or exploitation.
- s. Plan a series of broadcasted teaching to educate the community at large about work ethics and faith in the workplace.
- t. Create a small church library with materials related to Workplace Theology, Ethics, and Leadership.

What has been said about evangelism is true of workplace discipleship: "the harvest is great and the workers are few." Without wanting to diminish in any way the need for evangelists, church planters, pastors and other Christian vocations, it is nevertheless a critical time of need and opportunity for God to raise up men and women to help him bring those forty or fifty hours of week at the workplace under his active Lordship and the leading and power of the Spirit. This is not only a blessing to the workplace and to our society and neighborhood and nation, it actually is a prod toward the renewal of the church itself and an avenue for effective, God-honoring evangelism.

Conclusion

This work has been a great opportunity for me to serve the body of Christ in equipping Haitian church leaders to form the saints, so that they all can live out their faith in the workplace, connect their faith to their work, and bridge Sunday worship to Monday work. This thesis-project addresses key areas in the Haitian economy dealing with corruption, poverty, injustice, and the phenomenon of voodoo. The thesis-project provides not only Biblical teaching, theological education, and faith-work training to equip the Haitian saints for the workplace, but also strategies to help Haitian church leaders to effectively contribute to the socio-economic development and spiritual betterment of Haitians in the U.S. as well as in Haiti. The challenge of completing this enormous task is that one must deal with the pitfalls throughout the process of developing the thesis-project and implementing the related curriculum. One can never turn every stone to satisfy all the demands imposed by the purposes introducing the thesis-project. That is why further research must proceed in order to improve the future outcomes of this work with respect to the Haitian situation. In fact, I must revisit the whole process while choosing a course of action, planning it, and executing it in the Haitian context. The greatest benefit of this work resides in the availability of this document for the edification of the church, mostly for the poor Haitian saints living in the U.S. as well as in Haiti.

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VITA

Frantzy Delphonse (Nickname: Louloul) was born July 31, 1963 in Sucrerie Henrie, St. Louis in the Southern part of Haiti. After completing his studies at College St. Jean High School in the city of Aux-Cayes, Haiti in 1985, Frantzy entered Roxbury Community College in Boston, MA in 1988 and transferred in 1989 to Fitchburg State University in Fitchburg, MA where he received a Bachelor of Science with a major in Construction Engineering Technology in May 1992. Since 1997, he has been employed as a Mathematics teacher by the Boston Public Schools. In 1998, he entered Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, MA where he obtained a Masters Degree in Secondary Math Education in February 2000. Later, he attended Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary where he completed a Masters Degree of Divinity in 2003. In 2012, he re-entered Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary where he anticipates graduating with a Doctorate Degree in Ministry (Workplace Theology, Ethics, and Leadership) in May 2015. He has been married to his wife, Edouarde M. Delphonse, since 1992 and they have three kids: Frantz David, Jeremy Frantzy, and Ed Delphonse. Since 2008, Frantzy has been the founding Senior Pastor at Anointed Baptist Church in Hyde Park, MA.